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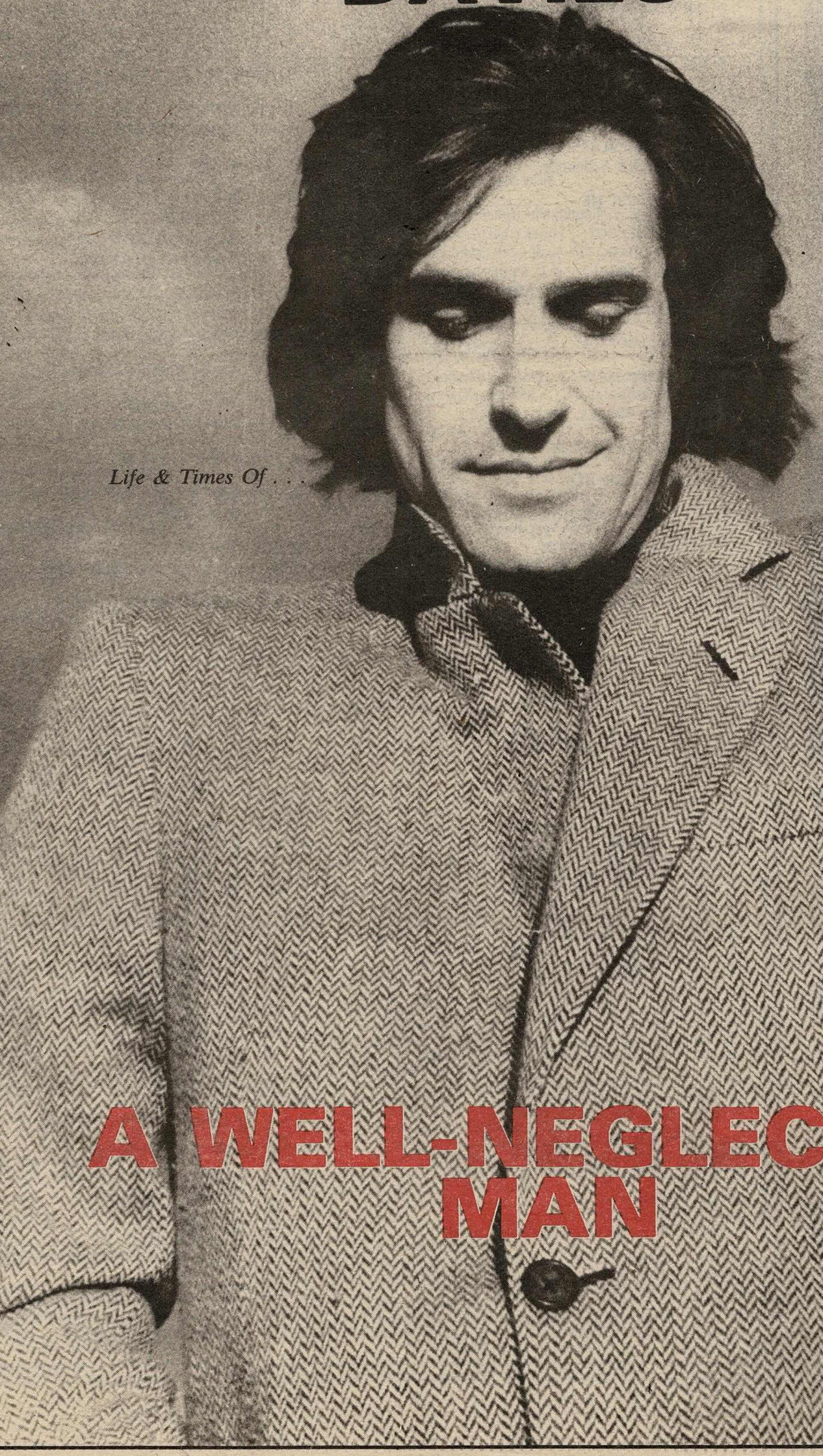

Life & Times Of . . . *The Kinks. Page 23.*

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FIVE YEARS AGO

Week ending April 15, 1972

Last Week	This Week		
1	1	WITHOUT YOU	Nilsson (RCA)
12	2	AMAZING GRACE	Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, Pipes, Drums and Band (RCA)
9	3	SWEET TALKIN' GUY	Chiffons (London)
4	4	HOLD YOUR HEAD UP	Argent (Epic)
2	5	BEG, STEAL OR BORROW	New Seekers (Polydor)
3	6	ALONE AGAIN (NATURALLY)	Gilbert O'Sullivan (MAM)
6	7	MEET ME ON THE CORNER	Lindisfarne (Charisma)
7	8	DESIDERATA	Les Crane (Warner Bros)
13	9	HEART OF GOLD	Neil Young (Reprise)
15	10	BACK OFF BOOGALOO	Ringo Starr (Apple)

TEN YEARS AGO

Week ending April 15, 1967

Last Week	This Week		
3	1	SOMETHIN' STUPID	Frank and Nancy Sinatra (Reprise)
4	2	PUPPET ON A STRING	Sandie Shaw (Pye)
1	3	RELEASE ME	Engelbert Humperdinck (Decca)
8	4	A LITTLE BIT ME, A LITTLE BIT YOU	Monkees (RCA)
2	5	THIS IS MY SONG	Harry Secombe (Philips)
11	6	HA! HA! SAID THE CLOWN	Manfred Mann (Fontana)
5	7	SIMON SMITH AND HIS AMAZING DANCING BEAR	Alan Price Set (Decca)
8	8	IT'S ALL OVER	Cliff Richard (Columbia)
7	9	I WAS KAISER BILL'S BATMAN	Whistling Jack Smith (Deram)
6	10	EDELWEISS	Vince Hill (Columbia)

15 YEARS AGO

Week ending April 13th, 1962

This Week	Last Week		
1	1	WONDERFUL LAND	Shadows (Columbia)
2	2	HEY! BABY	Bruce Channel (Mercury)
4	3	DREAM BABY	Roy Orbison (London)
9	4	WHEN MY LITTLE GIRL IS SMILING	Jimmy Justice (Pye)
5	4	TWISTIN' THE NIGHT AWAY	Sam Cooke (RCA)
3	6	TELL ME WHAT HE SAID	Helen Shapiro (Columbia)
14	7	HEY LITTLE GIRL	Del Shannon (London)
6	8	CAN'T HELP FALLING IN LOVE	Elvis Presley (RCA)
12	9	NEVER GOODBYE	Karl Denver (Decca)
8	10	LET'S TWIST AGAIN	Chubby Checker (Columbia)

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS C·H·A·R·T·S

SINGLES

Week ending April 16, 1977

This Week	Last Week			Weeks in chart	Highest position
1	(1)	KNOWING ME KNOWING YOU	Abba (Epic)	7	1
2	(2)	GOING IN WITH MY EYES OPEN	David Soul (Private Stock)	4	2
3	(5)	WHEN	Showaddywaddy (Arista)	6	3
4	(10)	RED SPELLS DANGER	Billy Ocean (GTO)	4	4
5	(8)	SOUND AND VISION	David Bowie (RCA)	9	4
6	(4)	I DON'T WANT TO PUT A HOLD ON YOU	Bernie Flint (EMI)	4	4
7	(17)	FREE	Deniece Williams (CBS)	2	7
8	(13)	YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A STAR	Marilyn McCoo/Billy Davis (ABC)	4	8
9	(7)	SUNNY	Boney M (Atlantic)	5	7
10	(3)	CHANSON D'AMOUR	Manhattan Transfer (Atlantic)	10	1
11	(9)	OH BOY	Brotherhood Of Man (Pye)	5	9
12	(12)	LAY BACK IN THE ARMS OF SOMEONE	Smokie (Rak)	5	12
13	(6)	MOODY BLUE	Elvis Presley (RCA)	6	5
14	(30)	PEARL'S A SINGER	Elkie Brooks (A&M)	2	14
15	(14)	LOVE HIT ME	Maxine Nightingale (United Artists)	5	14
16	(—)	LONELY BOY	Andrew Gold (Asylum)	1	16
17	(—)	SIR DUKE	Stevie Wonder (Motown)	1	17
18	(21)	TOGETHER	O. C. Smith (Caribou)	3	18
19	(—)	WHODUNIT BY TAVARES	(Capital)	1	19
20	(—)	HAVE I THE RIGHT	Dead End Kids (BDS)	2	20
21	(19)	ROCKBOTTOM	Lynsey De Paul/ Mike Moran (Polydor)	2	19
22	(24)	GIMME SOME	Brendon (Magnet)	3	22
23	(16)	MY KINDA LIFE	Cliff Richard (EMI)	6	11
24	(18)	I WANNA GET NEXT TO YOU	Rose Royce (MCA)	2	18
25	(28)	HOW MUCH LOVE	Leo Sayer (Chrysalis)	2	25
26	(—)	SOLSBURY HILL	Peter Gabriel (Charisma)	1	26
27	(11)	TORN BETWEEN TWO LOVERS	Mary MacGregor (Ariola)	8	4
28	(27)	SOUTHERN NIGHTS	Glen Campbell (Capitol)	2	27
29	(—)	THE SHUFFLE	Van McCoy (H & L)	1	29
30	(—)	A STAR IS BORN (EVERGREEN)	Barbra Streisand (CBS)	1	30

ALBUMS

Week ending April 16, 1977

This Week	Last Week			Weeks in chart	Highest position
1	(2)	ARRIVAL	Abba (Epic)	21	1
2	(4)	ENDLESS FLIGHT	Leo Sayer (Chrysalis)	14	2
3	(1)	PORTRAIT OF SINATRA	Frank Sinatra (Reprise)	6	1
4	(3)	THE SHADOWS 20 GOLDEN GREATS	(EMI)	11	1
5	(7)	HOLLIES LIVE HITS	(Polydor)	4	5
6	(6)	ANIMALS	Pink Floyd (Harvest)	10	2
7	(9)	COMING OUT	Manhattan Transfer (Atlantic)	5	6
8	(10)	RUMOURS	Fleetwood Mac (Warner Bros)	8	8
9	(8)	ABBA GREATEST HITS	(Epic)	54	1
10	(5)	STATUS QUO LIVE	(Phonogram)	7	5
11	(12)	EVERY FACE TELLS A STORY	Cliff Richard (EMI)	5	11
11	(12)	EVITA	Various Artists (MCA)	14	1
13	(18)	THE BEST OF JOHN DENVER II	(RCA)	5	13
14	(21)	WORKS VOL. 1	Emerson Lake & Palmer (Atlantic)	3	14
15	(16)	IN YOUR MIND	Bryan Ferry (Polydor)	8	8
16	(15)	PETER GABRIEL	(Charisma)	5	14
17	(13)	20 GREAT HEARTBREAKERS	(K-Tel)	10	3
18	(14)	A NEW WORLD RECORD	Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)	19	8
19	(22)	DAVID SOUL	(Private Stock)	19	2
20	(17)	LOW	David Bowie (RCA)	13	7
21	(25)	THE UNFORGETTABLE GLENN MILLER	(RCA)	2	21
22	(—)	A STAR IS BORN SOUND TRACK	(CBS)	1	22
23	(19)	HOTEL CALIFORNIA	Eagles (Asylum)	16	4
24	(—)	BARRY WHITE GREATEST HITS VOL II	(20th Century)	1	24
25	(23)	SONGS IN THE KEY OF LIFE	Stevie Wonder (Motown)	26	1
26	(24)	BURNING SKY	Bad Company (Island)	4	20
27	(—)	LIVING LEGENDS	Everly Brothers (Warwick)	1	27
28	(30)	BOSTON	(Epic)	10	12
29	(—)	DANDY IN THE UNDERWORLD	T Rex (EMI)	1	29
30	(28)	DAMNED DAMNED DAMNED	The Damned (Stiff)	3	21

U.S. SINGLES

Week ending April 16, 1977

This Week	Last Week		
1	(2)	DON'T GIVE UP ON US	David Soul
2	(1)	RICH GIRL	Daryl Hall & John Oates
3	(3)	DON'T LEAVE ME THIS WAY	Thelma Houston
4	(4)	THE THINGS WE DO FOR LOVE	10cc
5	(6)	I'VE GOT LOVE ON MY MIND	Natalie Cole
6	(7)	SO IN TO YOU	Atlanta Rhythm Section
7	(8)	SOUTHERN NIGHTS	Glen Campbell
8	(9)	HOTEL CALIFORNIA	Eagles
9	(11)	RIGHT TIME OF THE NIGHT	Jennifer Warnes
10	(14)	LIDO SHUFFLE	Boz Scaggs
11	(13)	TRYIN' TO LOVE TWO	William Bell
12	(15)	WHEN I NEED YOU	Leo Sayer
13	(5)	DANCING QUEEN	Abba
14	(17)	I WANNA GET NEXT TO YOU	Rose Royce
15	(18)	COULDN'T GET IT RIGHT	Climax Blues Band
16	(10)	LOVE THEME FROM "A STAR IS BORN"	Barbra Streisand
17	(12)	CARRY ON WAYWARD SON	Kansas
18	(22)	ANGEL IN YOUR ARMS	Hot
19	(23)	I'M YOUR BOOGIE MAN	K.C. & The Sunshine Band
20	(16)	MAYBE I'M AMAZED	Wings
21	(25)	CAN'T STOP DANCING	Captain & Tennille
22	(19)	DISCO LUCY (I LOVE LUCY THEME)	Wilton Place Street Band
23	(27)	YOUR LOVE	McCoo & Davis
24	(29)	CALLING DR. LOVE	Kiss
25	(20)	HERE COMES THOSE TEARS AGAIN	Jackson Browne
26	(24)	DO YA	Electric Light Orchestra
27	(—)	SIR DUKE	Stevie Wonder
28	(21)	TORN BETWEEN TWO LOVERS	Mary McGregor
29	(28)	WEEKEND IN NEW ENGLAND	Barry Manilow
30	(26)	I LIKE DREAMIN	Kenny Nolan

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

U.S. ALBUMS

Week ending April 16, 1977

This Week	Last Week		
1	(1)	HOTEL CALIFORNIA	Eagles
2	(2)	RUMOURS	Fleetwood Mac
3	(3)	A STAR IS BORN	Streisand / Kristofferson
4	(5)	BOSTON	Boston
5	(4)	THIS ONE'S FOR YOU	Barry Manilow
6	(7)	LEFTOVERTURE	Kansas
7	(6)	SONGS IN THE KEY OF LIFE	Stevie Wonder
8	(8)	ANIMALS	Pink Floyd
9	(9)	NIGHT MOVES	Bob Seger
10	(10)	LOVE AT THE GREEK	Neil Diamond
11	(12)	UNPREDICTABLE	Natalie Cole
12	(13)	SONGS FROM THE WOOD	Jethro Tull
13	(11)	YEAR OF THE CAT	Al Stewart
14	(14)	ASK RUFUS	Rufus featuring Chaka Khan
15	(15)	IN FLIGHT	George Benson
16	(16)	FLY LIKE AN EAGLE	Steve Miller Band
17	(17)	GREATEST HITS	Linda Ronstadt
18	(23)	BURNIN' SKY	Bad Company
19	(24)	A ROCK AND ROLL ALTERNATIVE	Atlanta Rhythm Section
20	(19)	A NEW WORLD RECORD	Electric Light Orchestra
21	(—)	WORKS VOLUME 1	Emerson, Lake & Palmer
22	(20)	WINGS OVER AMERICA	Wings
23	(22)	BEST OF THE DOOBIES	Doobie Brothers
24	(27)	SILK DEGREES	Boz Scaggs
25	(26)	SLEEPWALKER	Kinks
26	(—)	JEFF BECK WITH THE JAN HAMMER GROUP LIVE	
27	(21)	FRAMPTON COMES ALIVE	Peter Frampton
28	(18)	JOHN DENVER'S GREATEST HITS VOL 2	
29	(—)	CAROLINA DREAMS	Marshall Tucker Band
30	(—)	BIGGER THAN BOTH OF US	Hall & Oates

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

Ponty dates CORYELL GUESTS

JEAN-LUC PONTY and his band headline two London concerts at the New Victoria on May 27 and 28. Special guests on both shows are Larry Coryell and French guitarist Philip Catherine, appearing as a duo.

These, the only British gigs, come as the climax to a 22-date European tour. Tickets are on sale now priced £3, £2.50, £2 and £1.50.

Coryell last played here in November with Eleventh House, which he has now disbanded. He is currently rehearsing a new electric band, Coryell-Mouzon, which he co-fronts with percussionist Alphonse Mouzon. The band have been signed by Atlantic who, to coincide with the London gigs, are releasing a Coyell-Catherine duo album titled "Twin House".

...and more London concerts

DOLLY PARTON flies into Britain late next month to play five concerts dates. First to be confirmed is at London Rainbow on Saturday, May 28 (tickets on sale now priced £3.50, £2.75 and £1.50). Her remaining gigs — another in London and three in the provinces — are still being arranged.

THE JACKSONS, already set for the Royal Gala Show at Glasgow King's on May 17, headline their only other British date at London Hammersmith Odeon on May 24.

BARBARA DICKSON presents her own bill-topping concert at London New Victoria on June 4, with tickets priced from £1 to £2.50.

TWIN HEARTBREAKERS

Tom Petty joins Lofgren's shows

MUCH-ACCLAIMED American band Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers play their debut series of British dates as special guests on the upcoming Nils Lofgren concert tour — which, as reported last week, opens on May 8.

And there are plans for them to remain here after their gigs with Lofgren to headline a few further dates in their own right.

Promoter Ian Wright of MAM, who has just returned from the States after signing Petty, claims this will be the "most exciting package of the year". The band's debut album, "Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers", is being reactivated to coincide with their visit — it is on the Shelter label, distributed by Island.

Another date has been added to the Lofgren-Petty itinerary, at Liverpool Empire on May 23, making a total of 14 concerts. And Lofgren's two shows at Hammersmith Odeon on May 14 and 15 are being recorded by A&M for subsequent release as a live album.

Thunder tops 24-date tour

JOHNNY THUNDER and the Heartbreakers set out next week on a 24-venue tour extending until the end of June. The dates are split into two legs, to allow for a four-week TV and promotional visit to Europe starting in mid-May.

The 14 gigs confirmed so far are Halesowen Tiffany's (April 18), Kidderminster Town Hall (19), Derby Cleopatra's (20), Birmingham Rebecca's (21), Hastings Pier Pavilion (23), Newport Roundabout (27), Brighton Embassy Cinema (29), Hull College of Education (May 6), Liverpool Eric's Club (7), Winchester King Alfred College (11), Warrington Technical College (13), London Royal college of Art (June 10), Portsmouth Polytechnic (18) and Hereford College of Education (24). Another ten June dates have still to be finalised.

The band's double A-side single "Chinese Rock"/"Born Too Loose", produced by Chris Stamp, is now due for imminent release by Track Records and will probably be in the shops next week. The first 2,000 copies are being issued as a 12-inch in a full-colour bag.

JOHNNY THUNDER

O'SULLIVAN BACK ON THE BOARDS

GILBERT O'SULLIVAN makes his first live appearances in Britain for two years when he plays a string of eight concerts and university gigs next month. And for the first time, he will be performing completely solo, with only his own piano accompaniment.

Confirmed dates are Brighton Dome (May 6), York University (7), Oxford New Theatre (8), Lancaster University (11), Birmingham Aston University (12), Loughborough University (13), Manchester Ardwick Apollo (14) and Edinburgh Usher Hall (15).

A London concert is likely to be added to this itinerary. Meanwhile, tickets for all the above dates are on sale now. Priced between £1.25 and £2.50.

Explaining his decision to perform without a backing band, O'Sullivan commented: "It's something I've wanted to do for a long time. I think it well bring me closer to the audiences". He just finished recording material for an upcoming album, and a new single is being issued to coincide with the tour.

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BONEY M COMING

BONEY M, the German-based American band, plan to consolidate their recent British chart successes by headlining a major tour in the near future. The four-piece outfit, whose singles "Daddy Cool" and "Sunny" have kept them ever-present in the NME Top Thirty so far this year, have been taking German audiences by storm since setting themselves up in that country a couple of years ago. And a leading British promoter is currently setting up a deal with their German agent, which would bring them to Britain in late spring or early summer.

Rush tour

RUSH — the three-piece Canadian heavy metal band with a large following in North America — play their debut British concerts in early June at Manchester Free Trade Hall (2), Birmingham Odeon (3) and London Hammersmith Odeon (4).

These are the band's only British dates in their extensive European itinerary. Tickets go on sale this Saturday (16) at all three venues, priced £2.50, £2 and £1.50. Promoters are Straight Music.

The outfit will feature material from their two Phongram albums, the live set "All The World's A Stage" (released in November) and "Caress Of Steel" (January).

New bassman for Manfred

MANFRED MANN's Earth Band have decided to replace bass player Colin Pattenden. They returned recently from an extensive six-week U.S. tour, and have gone into the Workhouse Studios to audition and rehearse applicants for the vacancy. When a new bassist is fixed the band will record the follow-up to their hit album "The Roaring Silence". They will not be doing any British dates in the immediate future, although an autumn tour is planned.

THE McGARRIGLES

TV ROCK 'So It Goes' guest order

SCREENING ORDER is now set for Granada TV's new half-hour concert series *"So It Goes."* Shows will be seen in certain ITV areas on Sunday nights, and they feature Andy Fairweather-Low (this weekend), Kate and Anna McGarrigle filmed at Manchester Opera House (April 24), Cado Belle (May 1), Sad Cafe filmed in rehearsal (8), Kursaal Flyers (15) and Asleep At The Wheel (22). One or two more programmes may be added to the series.

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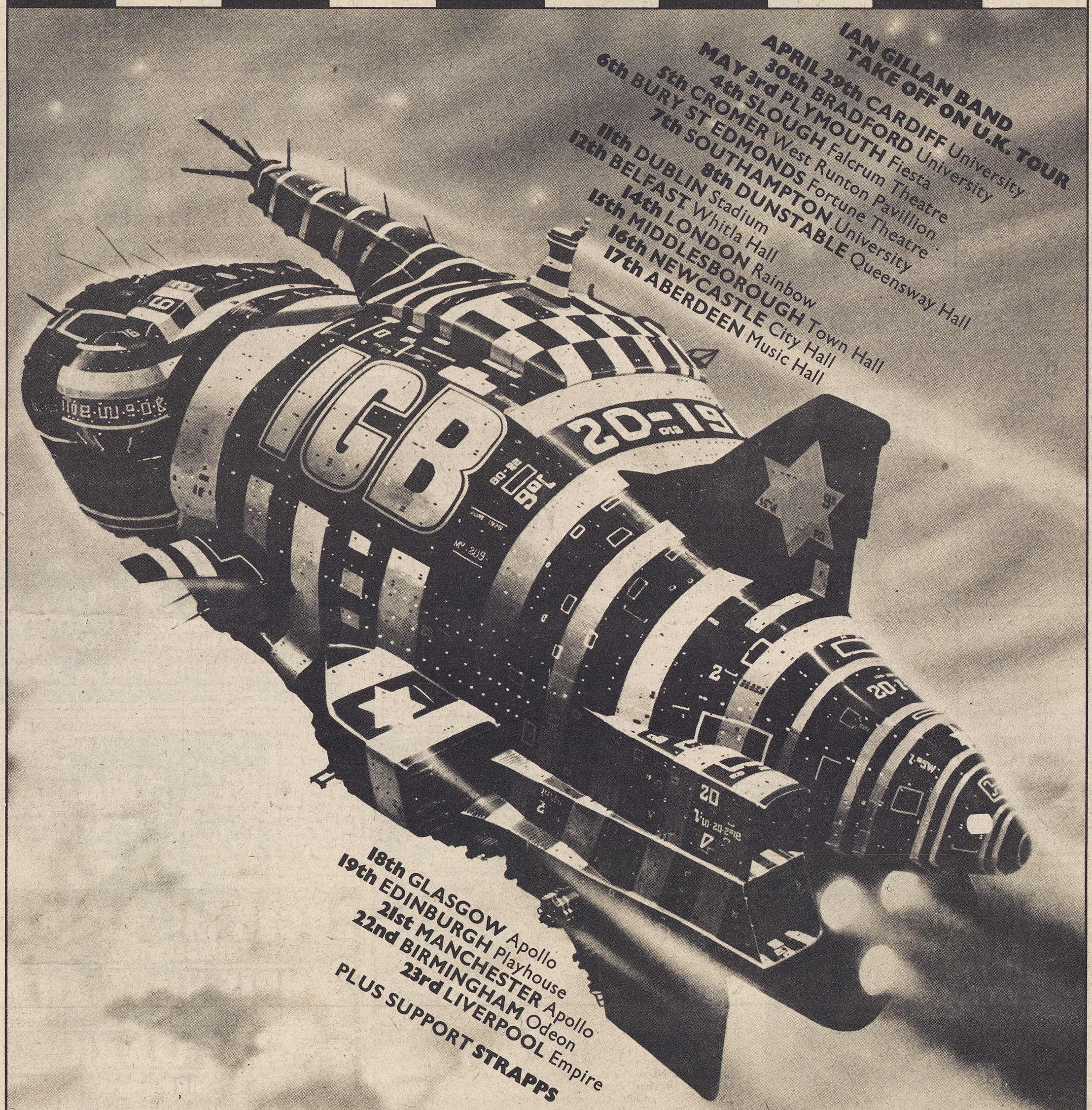
IAN GILLAN BAND



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ON THE ROAD

REMUS DOWN BOULEVARD play **Bristol** Granary (tonight, Thursday), **Burton** 76 Club (Friday), **London** Marquee (April 19), **Cromer** West Runton Pavilion (22), **Lincoln** Castle Club (23), **Bournemouth** The Village (25), **London Covent Garden** Rock Garden (26), **Portsmouth** Polytechnic (27), **Croydon** Red Deer (28), **Tolworth** Toby Jug (May 2), **London Putney** Railway Hotel (3), **Leeds** Fforde Green Hotel (6) and **Bishops Stortford** Hockerill College (14).

GEORGE HATCHER BAND headline a tour of Ulster and Eire in mid-May, then return to play **Birmingham** Barbarella's on May 27 and 28.

SQUEEZE, the upcoming South London rock band, have gigs at **Middlesbrough** Rock Garden (tomorrow, Friday, **London Covent Garden** Rock Garden (April 18), **London Hammersmith** Red Cow (21 and 28), **Dudley** J.B.'s Club (22) and **Reading** University (23).

"SALUTE TO SATCHMO" is a 40-date concert series set up by Ronnie Scott Directions featuring the Alex Welsh Band, Humphrey Lyttelton, George Chishom and Bruce Turner. It opens at **Loughborough** Town Hall on May 15 and continues until the autumn.

GEORGE MELLY and the Feet-warmers' remaining April dates are **Rhyl St. Asaph** Talardy Hotel (18 and 19), **Liverpool** Kirklands (20), **Worcester** Bankhouse (21), **Middlesbrough** Town Hall Crypt (23), **Leeds** Astoria Centre (24), **High Wycombe** Nags Head (25), **Nottingham** Isabella Two (27), **London Wimbledon** Dog and Fox (28), **London Oxford St.** 100 Club (29) and **Oxford** St. Peter's College (30).

BETHNAL, recent Polydor signing, play **Buckley** Tivoli (tonight, Thursday), **Barrow** Maxim's (Saturday and Sunday), **Cheltenham** Tramps (April 20), **Coventry** Mr. George's (21), **Corby** Nags Head (23), **Bletchley** Tramps (May 4), **Jacksdale** Grey Topper (5), **Manchester** Electric Circus (6), **Bradford** University (11), **East Dereham** Memorial Hall (13) and **Thatcham** Hamilton Club (14).

Isaac Hayes: autumn visit

ISAAC HAYES is now scheduled for a British tour in September, when he will headline ten major concerts nationwide. He was originally expected here in February for a co-topping tour with Dionne Warwicke, but the project fell through because it was found to be not economically viable.

RAY STEVENS is also being lined up for a series of concerts here in September, and confirmation of his visit is expected shortly.

BARRY WHITE, whose short British tour this winter was heavily over-subscribed, is returning next year. And to accommodate as many people as possible, he will play three or four concerts in the biggest venues available — such as Wembley Empire Pool and Londons Earls Court.

UPCOMING RELEASES

DENNY LAINE has recorded an album of Buddy Holly songs titled "Holly Days". Produced by Paul McCartney, it is issued by EMI on May 6, preceded this weekend by a single extracted from it, "Moon Dreams."

GLORIA GAYNOR has her single "Most Of All" out on Polydor on April 22, followed next month by her album "Glorious".

BOXER — now comprising Mike Patto (vocals), Chris Stainton (keyboards), Tim Bogert (bass), Adrian Fisher (guitar) and Ed Tuduri (drums) — have signed with CBS and have started work on a new album in Los Angeles for July release.

COLOSSEUM II, Jon Hiseman's band, have signed with MCA. Their first album, "Electric Savage", is due out in June.

WISHBONE ASH have a 'best of' compilation album titled "Classic Ash" issued by MCA on May 6. An EP containing two of the LP tracks — "Blowin' Free" and "Phoenix" — plus another Wishbone standard "Jail Bait" comes out on April 22.

THE DARTS, Flying Saucers, Matchbox and Freddie 'Finger' Lee feature on the album "It's Rock'n'Roll", released this weekend on the BBC's Beeb label.

MARSHALL TUCKER BAND: their new single "Hear It In A Love Song" is issued by Capricorn on April 22. Their album "Carolina Dreams" comes out in May.

Diamond sell-out

NEIL DIAMOND's five concerts at the London Palladium, starting June 23, have already sold out through postal bookings. Over 20,000 applications were received for the 11,500 available tickets. This means that despite the high prices (the five shows will gross over £100,000) the box-office will not be opening to personal callers. No other dates for Diamond have yet been fixed.

Jansch concerts

BERT JANSCH headlines a string of concerts timed to aid promotion of his new Charisma album "A Rare Conundrum", released April 29. So far confirmed are London School of Economics (May 14), Penzance The Garden (17), Plymouth Woods Leisure Centre (18), Aberystwyth University (20), Liverpool Eric's Club (21), Chester Gateway Theatre (22), Keele University (25), London Marquee Club (31), Birmingham Aston University (June 3), Norwich East Anglia University (4) and Slough Fulcrum Theatre (5). A few more gigs are being added to this itinerary.

AYERS FOR U.K. DATES

KEVIN AYERS goes back on the road later this month, to headline a string of nationwide college gigs. He will also be playing two major London concerts on May 14 and 15, although the venue has not yet been announced.

Confirmed dates are at Leicester University (April 27), Glasgow Queen Margaret Union (28), Edinburgh University (4), Bristol University (6), Manchester University (30), Dundee University (May 1), Hull University (4), Bristol University (6), Mancester University (7), Leeds Polytechnic (8), Keele University (11) and Norwich East Anglia University (13).

Ayers will be supported by his regular backing band, comprising Andy Somers (guitar), Rob Townsend (drums), Charlie McCracken (bass), Bill Livesey (keyboards) and Bill Evans (vocals and flute).

JUDAS JAUNT

JUDAS PRIEST return to the concert circuit after a lengthy absence, headlining an extensive 25-venue tour at leading halls throughout the country. To coincide with their trek, the band have a new album and single issued by CBS on April 22 — "Sin After Sin" and "Diamonds And Rust" respectively.

Dates are Cambridge Corn Exchange (April 22), Southend Kursaal (23), Maidenhead Skindles (24), Bournmouth Village (25), Cardiff Top Rank (26), Exeter University (27), Cromer West Runton Pavilion (29), Northampton County Ground (30), Croydon Greyhound (May 1), Plymouth Top Rank (2), Hemel Hempstead Pavilion (3), Cleethorpes Winter Gardens (5), Glasgow University (7), Sheffield Top Rank (8), Birmingham Town Hall (9), Liverpool Stadium (11), Manchester Ardwick Apollo (12), Newcastle Mayfair (13), Redcar Coatham Bowl (14), Blackpool Imperial Hotel (15), Canterbury Odeon (17), Guilford Civic Hall (18), Swindon Brunel Rooms (20), Hastings Pier Pavilion (21) and London New Victoria (22).

Lynyrd plan return

LYNYRD SKYNYRD are planning a return visit to Britain in the autumn, following the success of their recent January-Febrary tour here.

Last week in Miami, where the band are cutting a new studio album with producer Tom Dowd, Skynyrd's Ronnie Van Zant commented: "There may not be as much bread to be earned in England as in the States, but working there is more satisfying".

The new album is the band's first since their live double "One More From The Road" last year, and their first studio set since guitarist Steve Gaines joined the line-up. It is planned for autumn release by MCA, preceding the proposed U.K. tour.

● Ry Cooder and Ted Nugent are also planning return British tours in the autumn.

Climax Blues —London gig

CLIMAX Blues Band headline a one-off concert at London Drury Lane Theatre Royal on Sunday, May 22, in the series being recorded by Capitol Radio for subsequent airing.

This is a replacement date for their projected show on March 20, which had to be called off when the band's Peter Haycock went down with a throat infection.

They go into the studios next Monday for a month to record a new album and single. And they plan an early summer visit to America, where their single "Couldn't Get It Right" is rapidly climbing the charts.

Little Bob back

FRENCH BAND Little Bob Story begin yet another British tour next week. They have gigs at High Wycombe Nags Head (April 21), Liverpool Eric's Club (22), London Kensington Nashville (23), London Oxford St. 100 Club (26), Cheltenham Pavilion (27), Plymouth Woods Centre (28), Wigan Casino (30), Accrington Lakeland Lounge (May 1), Manchester Oaks Hotel (3), York University (4), London Camden Dingwalls (5), Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic (6) and Birmingham Barbarella's (7). They are now working almost as frequently in Britain as in France, and their next tour here is already set for a month from mid-June.

Muscles headlining

MUSCLES, the Birmingham-based band who have already supported on several major tours, are set for a headlining series of dates in their own right. They play Sutton Coldfield Good Hope Hospital Club (April 25), Birmingham St. Peter's College (27), Folkestone La Clique (28), Retford Porterhouse (29), Fishguard Frenchman's Motel (30), Cradley Heath Haden Hill Centre (May 2), Leeds New Pentagon (5), Langley College of Further Education (6), Stroud Leisure Centre (7), Nottingham Trent Polytechnic (10), Doncaster Outlook (11), Plymouth College of St. Mark and St. John (13), Brighton Top Rank)15), Bingley College of Education (18), Sheffield Thornbridge College (19) and Birmingham Aston University (27).

HAMBURG TAPES

Beatles lose Court battle

THE DOUBLE ALBUM of the Beatles live at the Hamburg Star Club in 1962 has been given High Court clearance for sale in Britain. And Paul Murphy's Lingasong company plan to make 100,000 copies available within the next month, retailing at £4.99 each.

The Beatles had sought an injunction to prevent release of the albums, recorded on a domestic tape machine before they sprang to fame. But the judge dismissed their last-minute plea because, he said, they had known of the existence of the tapes for months and should have acted sooner.

The Star Club set features 26 tracks, 13 of them never commercially recorded by the Beatles. Titles include "Your Feet's Too Big", "Lend Me Your Comb" and "Ain't Nothing Shakin' Like The Leaves On A Tree". Although initially recorded on a single hand-held microphone, over £40,000 is said to have been spent on improving the technical quality.

STAR LINE-UP ON NEW DALTREY LP

ROGER DALTREY'S new solo album, "One Of The Boys", is released by Polydor on May 13. It marks his debut as a songwriter, with composer credit on three tracks — "Doing It All Again", "Satin And Lace" and "The Prisoner". Paul McCartney contributes the song "Giddy", Colin Blunstone wrote "Single Man's Dilemma", and Phillip Goodhand-Tait penned two numbers (both featuring Hank B. Marvin on guitar) — "Parade" and "Leon". The set also includes Daltrey's newly-released single "Written On The Wind". Among guest musicians are Alvin Lee, Eric Clapton, Andy Fairweather-Low, Mick Ronson, John Entwistle, Jimmy McCulloch and Rod Argent.

TWO FOXES AND A YELLOW DOG

FOX founder members Kenny Young and Herbie Armstrong have formed a new group called Yellow Dog. They have been signed by Virgin Records, who release their debut single "For Whatever It's Worth" this weekend, followed on May 13 by their first album, "Yellow Dog".

Also in the line-up are ex-Stealers Wheel bassist Gary Taylor, Cat Stevens' regular drummer Gerry Conway, guitarist Jim Gannon and guitarist Andy Roberts, who is currently a member of Roy Harper's band.

Although all these musicians are likely to be involved in future live work by Yellow Dog, it will not occupy them full-time, nor interfere with their other commitments. Neither does it mean that Fox have broken up, and they are expected to be back in action later in the year.

Roy presses on

ROY HARPER has now completed the European leg of his re-scheduled tour, and begins British dates next week. His manager said that Harper is, with medical advice, managing to carry on without further health upsets — and he has no doubt that his British itinerary will be completed without further interruption.

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Oh to be a tax exile, now that April's here . . .

***GENESIS** haven't gone yet — but the thought is obviously in mind. When you're getting big in America the Taxman becomes a problem. **STEVE CLARKE** visits L.A. to check it out.*

INSTEAD OF the customary dazzling LA sunshine, a greyness covers the landscape, emphasising its monotony as the cab takes us through a seemingly endless mire of neon-infested boulevards from Sunset Strip to the Genesis gig at Inglewood.

Such is the incessant repetition of advert hoardings — psychotic-looking male models staring out at you from the cigarette ads — that you get the impression you're not moving.

But the appearance of the brilliant matt white of the Forum tells us we have not in fact been standing still.

The Forum is the gig — an immaculate, impressive building whether viewed from outside or in. It's a sports arena-cum-rock venue. Squat 'Norman' arches interrupt its circular perimeter at regular intervals and the entire thing looks as perfect as if it had just been dropped from outer space.

Inside, the ushers and usherettes, in the tradition of LA tack, wear (wait for it) 'togas'. The girls' legs are clad in panty hose, so if you're into legs this is for you.

The Forum's ceiling is like a gargantuan bicycle wheel, spoke-type struts radiating from the roof's centre.

Right, it's one hell of a venue. There's space to breathe, and despite its 18,000 capacity (for a rock concert) you can still see and feel part of what's happening.

But to the point. Genesis have pulled in 15,000 Californians tonight, double the number they played to in LA last year on "the Bill Bruford tour". And while their rise is by no means mercurial, the current tour is going to consolidate their position in the States as a Top Rock Attraction.

Their 45-date tour began in February and they've already played New York's 22,000 seater Madison Square Garden, drawing 15,000 or so, for the first time in their career.

They haven't made it on a large scale *everywhere* in the States. They're still playing a few college dates, especially in the South — but as Phil Collins later tells me, "In every town we've played, we've at least doubled our audience."

Moreover, their recent album, "Wind And Wuthering", despite lacking the immediacy of its predecessor "A Trick Of The Tail", has become Genesis's most successful in America. To date it's sold 150,000, reaching the low 20s in major album charts.

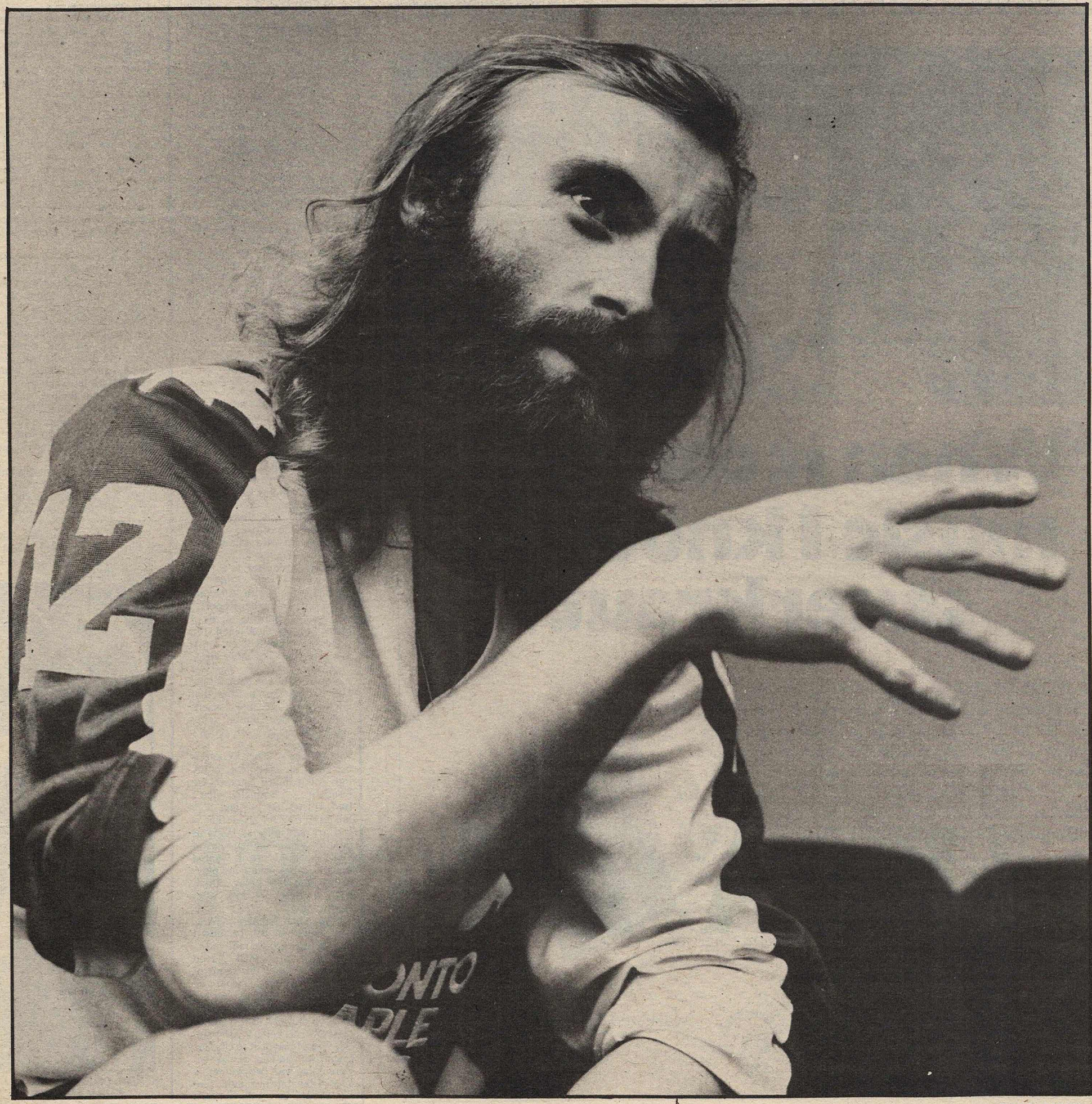
Genesis, as you may remember, re-opened London's Rainbow Theatre at the New Year to less than unanimous good reviews — although I reckoned that apart from new drummer Chester Thompson's performance there wasn't a lot to complain about — and they're keen to set the record straight, presumably a reason why I've been invited to see the group in Los Angeles.

IN TERMS of material and presentation there has been little change in their set since their third London date (after the first two Rainbow gigs Genesis restructured their set), though, of course, Thompson is playing a lot better.

Thompson now plays with bite. But strangely enough, he doesn't sound like a black American drummer, instead playing like Phil Collins, though with less decoration, only occasionally showing his roots with funky phrases. His only lapse at the Forum was during parts of the epic "Supper's Ready" — though with an arrangement so complex you can't blame him, seeing as how he's only been with the band a few months.

Overall, Genesis played heavier in LA than they did at the beginning of the year in London, and with more style

■ *Continues over*



Well, y'see, it's like this . . . PHIL COLLINS *pic: PAUL CANTY*

GENESIS

■ *From previous page*

once they'd lost an initial stiffness, making the last two thirds of the show excellent. Collins worked with incredible energy at times receiving more applause for his intrinsically British comic routines (you know, the tap dancing, tambourine banging sequences) than the music.

And while it seems totally redundant just point a laser at the stage as a way of heightening their visual licks (as Genesis do during parts of their show), they have one visual trick involving lasers which is pretty damn stunning, creating a revolving catherine-wheel-like effect immediately above them at the climax of "Supper's Ready".

Onstage, Genesis remain one of the Seventies finest rock bands.

WE'VE GONE from being in debt to having a tax problem," says voluble Phil Collins, stretched out on his hotel bed after the gig, fatigue showing on his face. His wife Ann is watching TV next door, and Collins is drinking a cold Coors (America's best beer, although that isn't saying a lot).

Our conversation has found its way to the ticklish subject of money.

"I never think about doing this kind of thing for *money* . . . I mean, Christ . . .", said Collins after I'd put to him Peter Gabriel's point about one of his reasons for quitting Genesis being his desire not to become part of the rock machinery, i.e. not to get bogged down in the business.

"I can understand what he means, but he's as much part of the rock machinery now as we are. I see faults with what we do but then I see a damn sight more faults with a lot of other bands.

"Everybody's doing it to be as successful as possible, and we all know what that means. It means you have to think about whether you spend this year in the country or whether you don't. Whether you make twice as much money or you don't.

"Peter has to be involved in that otherwise his record company wouldn't . . . you know.

"I don't want to make it sound like I'm rolling in money. I'm overdrawn, right? My current account is overdrawn. I get 25 dollars a day over here to pay for my food. Personally I have no money, but I've been told . . ."

From left; Steve Hatchett, Tony Banks, Chester Thompson, Phil Collins (in foreground) and Mike Rutherford. Pic: ROBERT ELLIS

In fact, Genesis have got to the point where they have a tax problem. With their ever increasing success in the States it's not impossible that they might join the legion of the tax exiles.

The problem has arisen essentially because of money earned through touring — and that's money made in America and Canada. Whereas while their albums always achieve good chart positions in Britain they don't sell more than 200,000 or so, peanuts compared to what, say the Floyd sell.

Only last summer that Collins' lifestyle changed appreciably — the drummer and his family moving from a £15 a week flat in Chiswick to a £22,000 house. And that was after several years of success with Genesis. Guitarist Steve Hackett too has moved to a reasonably sized town house from a flat.

When discussing the pros and cons of leaving Britain for a year to become a tax exile, Collins also makes the point about Genesis's relatively limited future.

"Within three years Genesis won't be anymore. I might not make any more money for the rest of my life."

Why the three-year life span? Well, guitarist Hackett has set aside time later this year to do another solo album, and therefore there's the possibility that other members might also want to get involved in solo projects.

Collins points out: "Tony (Banks), for instance, likes to get heavily committed to something and if he became heavily committed to a solo thing and it started to work . . . Basically the point is if we all said we're not going to see each other for six months there's a chance we might not come together again, although we do get on well — we don't argue anymore."

Collins himself has been more heavily involved in solo pursuits than the rest of his colleagues put together — working in the studio and on the road with Brand X, exercising penchant for jazz and less-arranged music, doing the odd session, working of late with such diverse artists as American singer-songwriter Elliot Murphy and Eno.

He appears on the soon-to-be-released Brand X album "Morocanroll" but has been replaced in the line-up so the group no longer have to rely on gaps in Genesis's work schedule for their own live dates — although he doesn't rule out the possibility of working with the group onstage at some point in the future.

Genesis, however, still comes first and the addition of jazz/rock-experienced Chester Thompson to the line-up gives Collins added confidence in the band's music.

After Bill Bruford's departure he had several drummers in mind, including Elton John's drummer Roger Pope, former Joe Walsh and Steve Stills' drummer Joe Vitale, and the excellent Aynsley Dunbar — as well as Thompson.

"Having Chester is a positive shot in the arm. He wouldn't play with someone like a son of Weather Report," he says — showing signs of musicians' paranoia and the great respect he holds for musicians in the jazz-rock field. "Chester gets off on our melodies. And the mere fact of him getting into it from that angle gives me more confidence in our music. That sounds like a jerk off, but it's not.

"Obviously when Genesis are doing an album I'm totally into it but then I listen to the freedom . . . Basically, what I find frustrating — and I've talked to Chester about this — is I try and play as black as possible within the confines of Genesis, therefore I wanted him to play what *he* plays rather than what I play. I think he's in sympathy with what we're doing.

"I'm much happier playing with him than Bill because I think it does groove more now.

"When Bill and I played together I think the sense of occasion over-rode what we were actually playing. I've got a tape of Hamburg from the tour we did with Bill, which I remember as being a good gig. But when I played it to Chester to give him an idea of what we were doing with two drummers a lot of the time it sounded like we were at each other's throats. We were getting in each other's way."

However, for my money the Collins/Thompson team is yet to reach the potency of the Bruford/Collins liaison — and Collins does admit that musicians tend to regard what they're doing now as better than what they did immediately before.

GENESIS WILL, according to Collins, play London again in June and are anxious to convince Londoners they haven't lost their touch — an impression they feel might have been given at the Rainbow.

"London was well . . . errhh," Collins hesitates, and finally admits he doesn't know what to think about it anymore.

"It could have been magical. But it wasn't as magical as we hoped."

So do you think you blew it?

"I'm keen to get back, put it that way. 'Cause I think the show now is a different group from the one that played London.

"Although there is a formula, Genesis don't *work* to a formula. There aren't that many bands that go down consistently well every night. But we do now.

"I saw ELO recently and ELO use their lasers every single tune," he digresses. "There was no taste. I think there was apathy from the audience as well because they didn't feel they were being treated with respect."

Future plans for Genesis include the release of an EP later this month and a live album in late summer. The EP features four tracks Genesis couldn't squeeze onto "Wind And Wuthering", including two, "Match Of The Day" and "Pigeons", which Collins reckons could give Genesis a hit single.

He insists: "No way is the music on the EP secondary to what we did on the album. We feel as strongly about these things as the rest of the stuff."

The live album will feature tracks recorded on the current tour and material recorded when Bruford was with the band. It'll be a double album and sell for less than the price of a studio double. Sounds familiar, eh? But Collins says the group's decision to release it has nothing to do with the success of "Frampton Comes Alive".

Says Collins: "A live album is a very valid statement. And I think we live seem to cut it a lot better, even now, than on record."

Even so, he thinks the record will be their biggest seller to date. Doubtless it'll do well in the States.

PHIL COLLINS. Pic: JILL FURMANOVSKY

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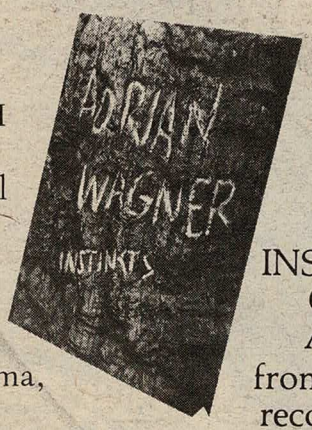

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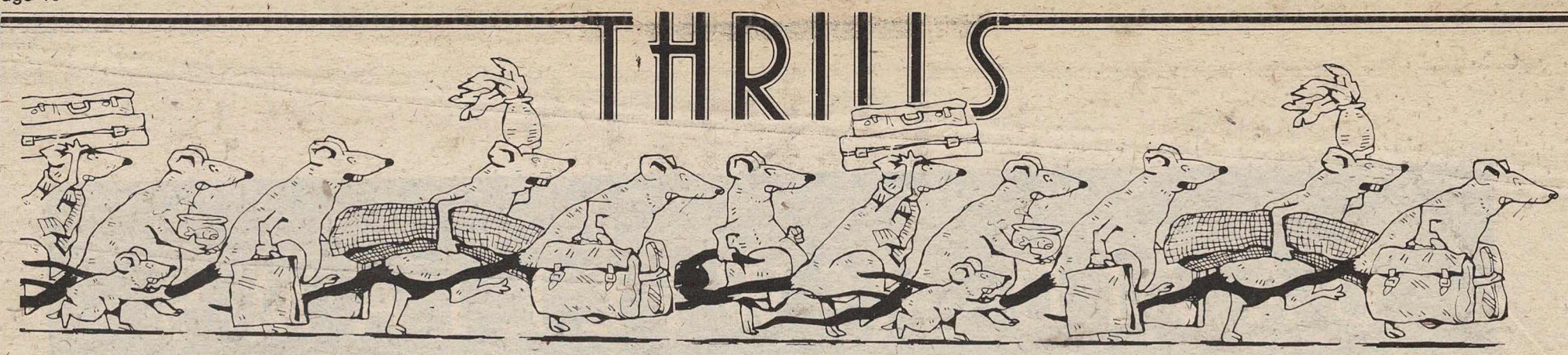
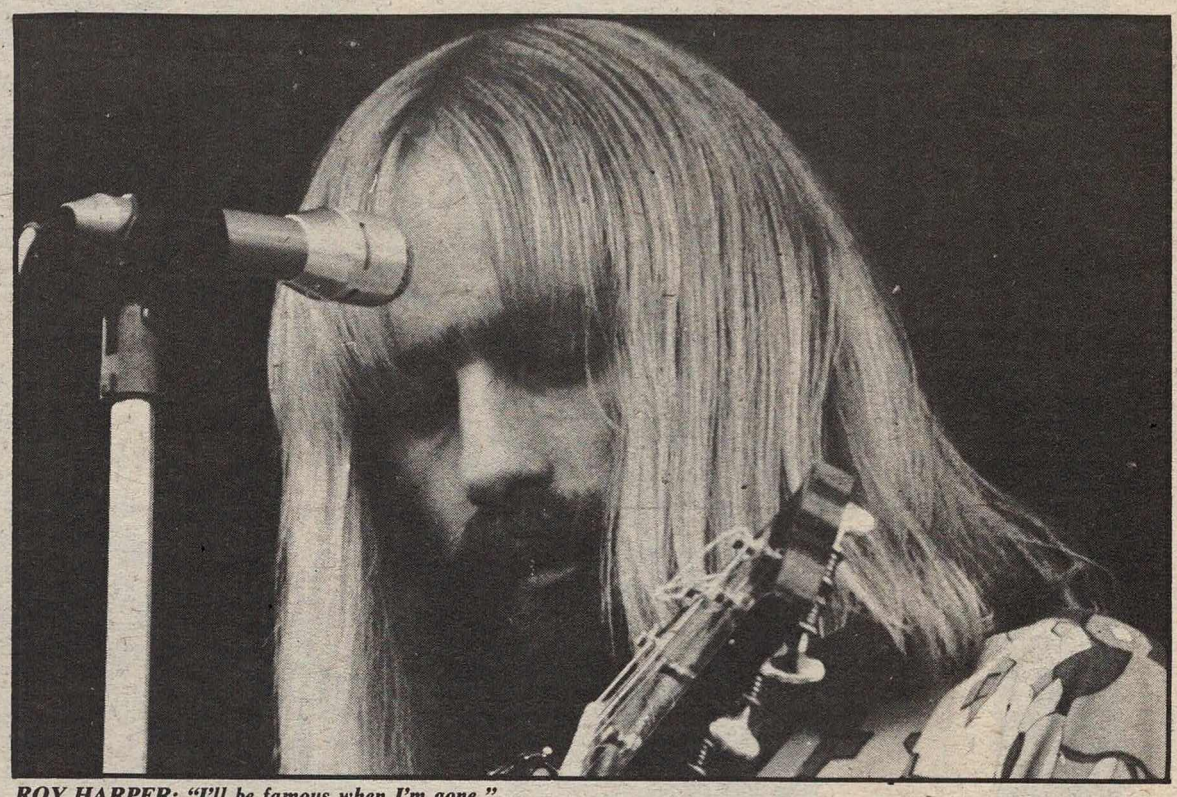


WHAT NOW FOR ROY HARPER?



ROY HARPER: "I'll be famous when I'm gone."

IT'S UNLIKELY that Roy Harper would be admitted to a health and happiness club. Because of his seemingly chronic illness he is facing a real possibility that the curtain will prematurely close on his career — yet another cruel body blow on top of all the misfortune he's experienced in the past.

"I guess I'll be unlucky to the day I die," he gloomily predicts. "And I'll probably be unlucky on that day too."

Genius, you see, really is pain.

"Anybody who's an innovator, and I think I am one, is made to suffer for various reasons. It's almost like the old saints doing penance and getting killed before the rest of Christianity could settle down to a middle road.

"If you're in the vanguard you automatically suffer."

Over a month ago, during his eagerly-awaited British tour, Harper was hospitalised with a serious blood infection. Since his discharge he's made an almost desperate effort to continue performing.

With his band Black Sheep he worked Europe as soon as he was fit enough, and although he collapsed in Germany he honoured all bookings. Next week he begins his rescheduled British concerts.

After that he'll decide whether it was his final farewell.

He is still ill. He's suffering a strain on his lungs and feels washed out. He says that if his health continues to deteriorate he'll seriously consider quitting stage work.

According to him there are only two other options: first, to stop writing songs he finds strenuous to perform; second to move into the shadows as a rhythm guitarist and engage a lead vocalist.

"Townshend's done pretty well with Roger Daltrey," he opines. "So I don't think it's an insane idea. I just do far too much, and I have to abdicate on one or two levels soon."

You may recall that four years ago Harper thought he was near death's door — but recovered. This time, however, he seems resigned to rethinking his approach simply to make sure he doesn't join rock's casualities.

It's particularly distressing because he has at last achieved a musical ideal by forming Black Sheep after his previous band, Trigger, experienced several disasters. Fresh artistic satisfaction and enthusiasm is illustrated on his latest album, "Bull In A Ming Vase", which he proudly asserts is really only his 'second' album — "HQ" being the first — even though he's made eight other sets previously.

"If I'd got a band together when I was younger, instead of becoming a solo artist, I think I'd have found my true niche sooner. I probably did the wrong thing for seven or eight years. My great joy is working with others and manipulating from within, rather than being a dictator from without."

Musically he believes he has adapted to the year 1977. He's mellowed out, both in style and lyrical statement.

'It's a mellower time we're living in," he explains, "and that makes the record ("Bull") sound more accessible.

"I could still be malicious and militant, but if I worked in those terms I might just as well ditch the band and become an acoustic guitarist/singer again. There's no point having a band if you're going to become Phil Ochs (the late American protest singer).

"But the thing is, everything Phil Ochs portrayed actually did die in 1972/73, and Phil died with it. There was no point in carrying that on, because a great uselessness was seen about all that sort of behaviour around him.

"And I don't want to stay in the old position. I'm not an idiot. I continue to move with the world, and sometimes ahead of it unfortunately."

It's sad that Harper has yet to fulfil his aspirations for artistic independence. Recently he recorded the single "One Of Those Days In England" as a deliberate attempt to gain commercial success — so that he would no longer have to rely on record company financial backing.

"It's almost like being supported by the government," he comments bitterly. "I would dearly like to be independent, but I'm not.

"If this current situation carries on I'll have to become a single acoustic guitarist-singer again — which is a step I *do not* want to make. My work can not be done justice by anything less that a band.

"If it happens it'll be a sad day — a kind of artistic death. "You'll still get the poems, but they won't be performed the way they should be.

"I'm just fighting for that economic stability to achieve my artistic ideals."

But he gives an unhappy impression that time is quickly running out. And since ill health has caused him to appraise his success, he's also only too aware of his failures.

"There was so much in music I could have changed *if* I'd had the power — and that one has always bugged me. I know that my own generation has changed the world the same way that the last generation did, and the one before that. But I'd have liked to have played a greater part.

"What's going to happen to me is that I'll become well-known after I'm dead, when all I've written is no longer relevant."

□ TONY STEWART

THE MAKING OF A LEGEND

SYLVESTER STALLONE is a showman, a publicist's dream.

Not long ago he was just another struggling actor with only bit parts *(Death Race 2000)* and a starring role in *The Lords of Flatbush* to his credit.

Down and out in New York with the rent due and his wife pregnant, he set out to write a script that would pull him out of the hole.

His idea was for a boxing movie, based on the true-life tale of Check Wepner, the Bayonne Bleeder, a no-account bruiser who had the big break of fighting Ali and managed to floor the champ in Round Nine.

Using this as his inspiration Stallone created Rocky, the Italian Stallion, who by a strange quirk of fate gets the chance to fight The Big One and for the first time in his life gain some self-respect.

The first rough draft took him three days and it wasn't long before the major studios were sniffing.

They offered Stallone 10,000 dollars for the script — for use as a vehicle for such box-office big boys as James Caan or Burt Reynolds.

Stallone wasn't selling.

Like Rocky, he sensed that this was his main chance, and he wasn't going to let anyone else take it for him.

Eventually United Artists agreed to invest a chicken feed million dollars hiring a bunch of solid professionals to back Stallone and pull the movie through if Stallone flopped.

The result exceeded all expectations. Stallone's belief in the movie and its message shone through and when word-of-mouth messages began turning to a steady stream of dollars at the box office United Artists suddenly realised they had potential goldmine on their hands and put the whole weight of their machine behind it.

The results must have staggered even Stallone.

The movie has been at Number One in the cinema audience ratings in the U.S. for over six consecutive weeks, grossing more than 25 million dollars in the process.

Stallone was nominated for Oscars as both Best Actor and Best Screenwriter (only Sir Charles Chaplin and Orson Welles have previously been so honoured), and although he lost out in both categories the movie was voted Best Picture, with another golden trophy going to the Director John G. Avildsen.

This success led to a cover war on the music from the movie, with eight versions of "Gonna Fly Now", the theme song, and five of "You Take My Heart Away", the movie's other significant tune.

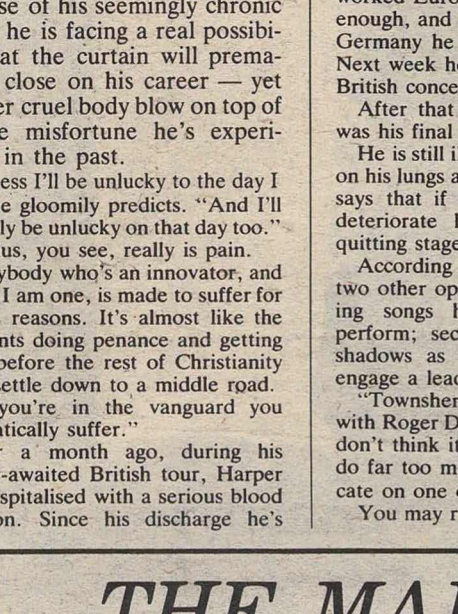
Stallone's struggle to make it has paid off, though there are signs that he is already a trifle wary of the way his suffering - to - stardom life is being portrayed.

He told one reporter: "You guys love to lay it on — how I grew up in an orphanage and brushed my teeth every morning with a spike.".

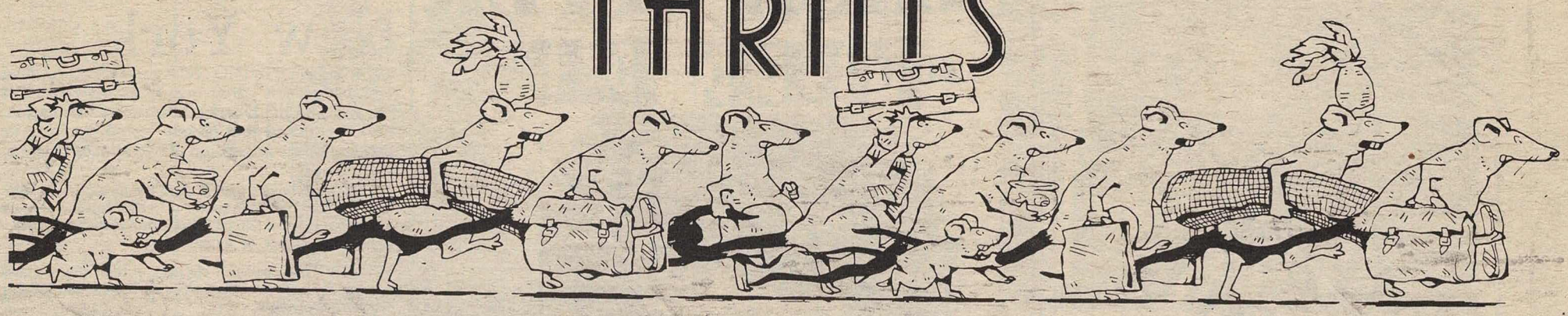
Nevertheless at the age of 30, Stallone *is* the Golden Boy with a sequel to *Rocky* already on the cards.

□ DICK TRACY

'ROCKY' STALLONE, the Golden Boy



THRILLS



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Take a sample of tomato and cheese sandwiches ...

2

... add a large handfull of bay leaves ...

3

... and two old boots ...

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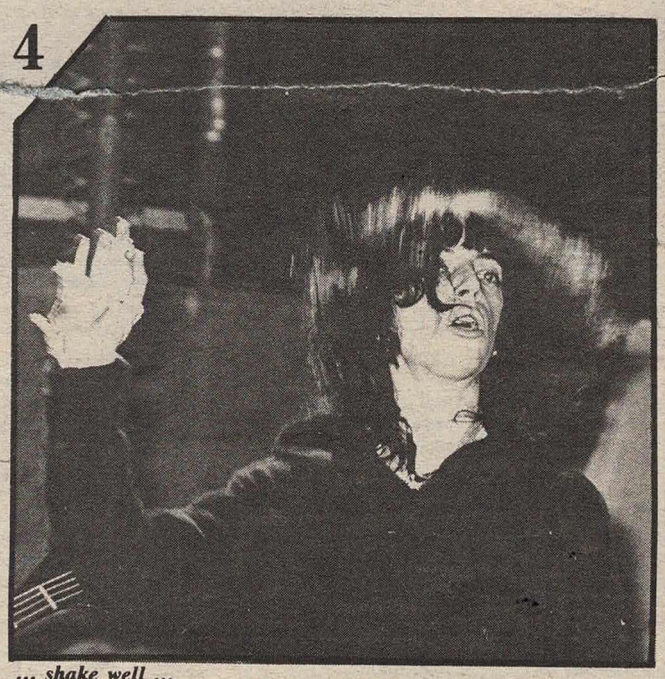


... shake well ...

5

... sample the mixture. Too much cinnamon, perhaps? ...

6

... enjoy that feeling of post prandial satisfaction and ponder whether Clive Davis will advance you £1 million on your first cookery book.

PATTI SMITH COUSCOUS WITHOUT TEARS

Yes you too can fantasise mosques and Persian rugs the same as the stars. It's all here in an easy to follow illustrated guide.

PATTI SMITH recently took a well-deserved rest from scratching around in her neck brace to etch a cozy sketch of life *chez* Smith-Lanier. At her Greenwich Village apartment she spoke out from amongst the pool-tables and reggae singers to reveal her domestic bliss.

In the corner, a five-foot high white wicker bird-cage. In the bird-cage, one ostrich egg.

Said young Patti (a hard-wearing if slightly shopsoiled 30 plus): "Allen gave me a load of bread to buy furniture and I bought that birdcage. He got the egg. If it hatches we're in trouble. He's been my boyfriend for six years and he's the breadwinner. Takes care of me. We're old-fashioned in that way. We've lived in every dive imaginable."

Looking cute if slightly emaciated, Patti shared the secret of how she maintains that sylph-like silhouette.

"I've been 105 pounds for 10 years. Before that less. That's why I had to fantasize about Arthur Rimbaud. I wasn't exactly a dream date. I eat all the time. I love to eat. But with this manic energy I burn it off as I'm swallowing.

"I'm on a weird diet. I eat a lot of couscous and drink a lot of mint tea. The basic idea of couscous; keep it intuitive, a private ritual. It takes me out of my environment, calms me down. I fantasize mosques and Persian rugs.

"I'll tell you, the men usually do the cooking around here because none of them will eat my couscous. They all laugh at me.

If you want to try my recipe for couscous, here it is:

PATTI'S COUSCOUS FOR TWO
Handful of raisins
Small tin of anchovies
10 green olives
1 small bottle of olive oil
1 small natural yogurt
1 cup of couscous grain
Handful of fresh mint
Salt and pepper
1 garlic clove

Set two cups of water boiling in two saucepans. Throw most of the mint into saucepan 1, along with salt to taste and the garlic clove. Put 1 sprig of mint in saucepan 2. Reduce both pans to a simmer. Add couscous grain to saucepan 1, stir 2 minutes.

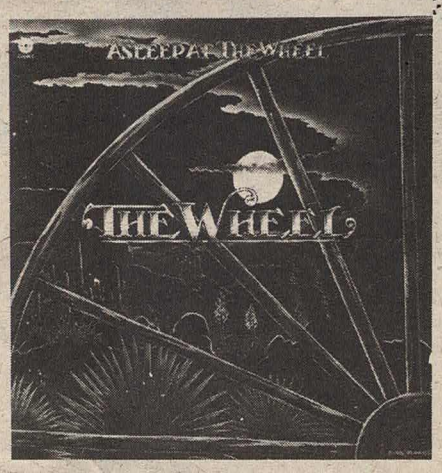
Cover. Leave for 3 minutes. Throw in raisins, stir, cover again. Wait 3 minutes. Strain mint tea from saucepan 2 into 2 glasses. Spoon the conscoucs mixture into 2 bowls. Half the anchovies and half the olives go into each bowl as does the olive oil. Stir and add pepper, then yogurt, then chopped dry mint, and serve."

Joe Stevens, our man in New York City, pronounced the couscous delicious, and added that Patti could roast his raisins anytime.

□ JOE STEVENS/JULIE BURCHILL

Good time country swing is not dead-

it's only Asleep At The Wheel.
live at Hammersmith Odeon Sat. April 16th.



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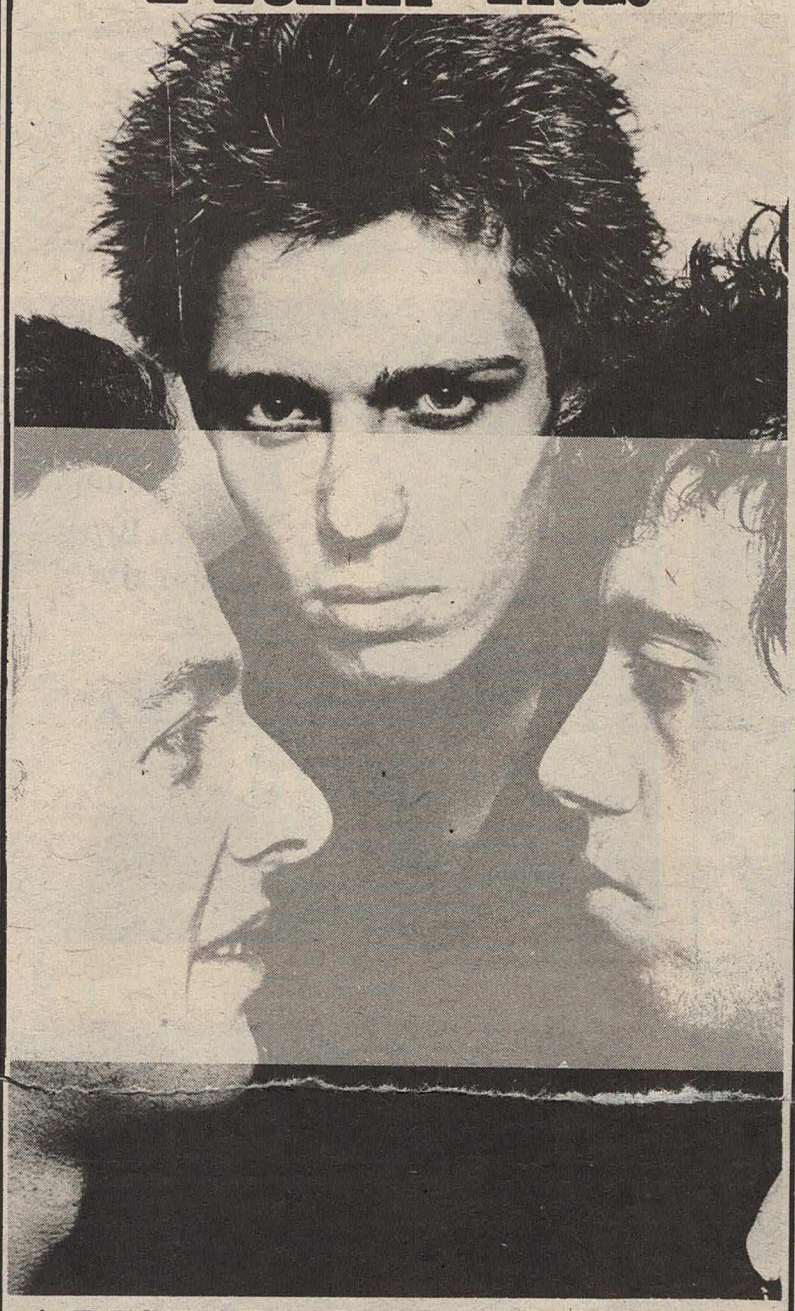

A RIOT OF YOUR OWN!

1977 is the Year Of The Clash — Hideous Bill Gangrene says so — and this is a second chance to obtain some of The Sound Of The Westway X-CLUSIVE for those NME readers shrewd enough to buy, borrow or steal ***(Cool it, Hideous old fellow! Ed)*** *a copy of the band's first album which is going into the record shops now. What we're giving away (yeah.* ***giving away)*** *is a genuine collector's item — a 14-minute EP which contains two new Clash, "Listen" and the UTTERLY INCREDIBLE "Capital Radio", plus an extended burst of our very own gunslinger Tony Parsons interviewing the band about Clash Philosophy 1977. This is the stuff you read in NME. Hear it from their own lips (if you don't believe us) on this FREE 45. To get this contemporary classic here's what you gotta do. On the inner bag of the first 10,000 copies of The Clash album you'll find a red sticker. Attach this to the announcement that you're now reading, legibly scrawl your name and address across the shaded area of the photo above and mail the lot to the following address: The Clash Offer, Pembroke House, Campsbourne Road, London N8 7PT. That's all. You don't need to enclose stamped adressed envelopes; and we don't want any money. The whole deal (including postage and packing of the single) is FREE. A gift from NME and The Sound Of Westway to anyone who's interested enough in getting hold of a copy of the new Clash elpee. Got it? Right! Can you think of a better way to spend Easter? N.B. This offer is open to readers in the U.K. only, and closes at the end of April '77*

New Deal in New York

THE CONTINUING relaxation of U.S. laws relating to "soft" drugs was taken a step further last week by the District Attorney of Manhattan, who announced that no-one would in future be prosecuted for possession of two ounces or less of marijuana.

This is even more lenient than the newly-taken steps towards decriminalisation in California, where maximum fines of £40 have been introduced for possession of one ounce or more.

MEANWHILE, calls for changes in the cannabis laws in the U.K. were made last week by 76-year-old Labour MP Marcus Lipton.

The Sun reported that Lipton had shocked his colleagues in the House of Commons by suggesting that cannabis should be freely available over the counter at the corner tobacconists'. He said that the present laws were a mess and should be scrapped.

More surprising, perhaps, than this, was the fact that the delegates at the annual conference of the Federation of Conservative Students voted overwhelmingly in favour of the legalisation of cannabis. All they need to do now is convince Maggie.

AT 5am on the morning of Saturday 26th March, the police code, "Julie has arrived", went out. It was the signal for 800 police, drawn from six of Britain's nine regional crime squads, to swing into action, in the largest police drug operation in Britain in living memory.

More than 60 search warrants and some firearms were issued for the massive series of raids in Scotland, Wales and the South West, aimed at breaking up what was alleged to be a major manufacturing and distributing organisation for LSD.

The outcome of the weekend raid, and others carried out in the following days, was that a total of 125 people were arrested.

Twenty-six people including two women, have been remanded in custody, while the rest have been bailed for various sums and are expected to appear in court in July.

Operation Julie, named after undercover W.P.C. Julie Taylor, was, in the words of Deputy Superintendent Dennis Greenslade of the South Western Regional Crime Squad, "successful beyond my wildest dreams." The police said they found two LSD factories and seized a large quantity of LSD.

Detectives from Scotland Yard co-operated fully with US narcotics agents, Interpol and various continental police forces.

Needless to say, Fleet Street took the opportunity to embellish the story. *The Express* for instance, quoted an unnamed detective as saying: "Some aspects of this operation make anything you have seen on TV or at the pictures seem very ordinary."

NME contacted Superintendant Wakeley at Swindon Police HQ, from where the raids were co-ordinated.

He claimed that the police operation had been going on "in excess of six months," and confirmed that it had been "extremely successful".

The *News of the World* claimed that when the cases come to court, "well-known names will be mentioned including a friend of the Royal Family."

The paper's other claims that undercover detectives spent 12 months posing as members of hippie communities in the West Country were described by Wakeley as "journalistic license" and the estimate that the ring "handled half the world market in LSD" as "inaccurate."

The Superintendant did confirm that no "society figures" were involved, and that among the people remanded were two doctors and two chemists. He could not confirm another press statement that among those still being sought was the brother of an ex-member of the Animals.

The most puzzling factor in the whole affair is that in the experience of Release, LSD has not been a common street drug in this country in recent years, which perhaps leads credence to reports that the syndicate was working mainly for the export market.

It seems that no-one outside the police have a clear overall picture of the true extent or nature of Operation Julie.

□ DICK TRACY

FROM THE ARCHIVES

An archive pic that will inevitably evoke feelings of sadness. The Jimi Hendrix Experience — Noel Redding, Mitch Mitchell and Hendrix — pictured with Mama Cass Elliott. We'd date the shot sometime in 1968. Both Hendrix and Mama Cass died in London — the former in September 1970 and the latter in July 1974.

The Detroit Spinners

On Record.

including

Rubber Band Man
Ghetto Child
Could It Be I'm Falling In Love
Then Came You
Wake Up Susan

On Tour.

APRIL

22nd	Friday	Odeon, Birmingham
23rd	Saturday	California Ballroom, Dunstable
24th	Sunday	Empire, Liverpool*
29th	Friday	Hammersmith Odeon, London
30th	Saturday	Apollo, Manchester

MAY

1st	Sunday	Fairfield Hall, Croydon

Support: Brass Construction
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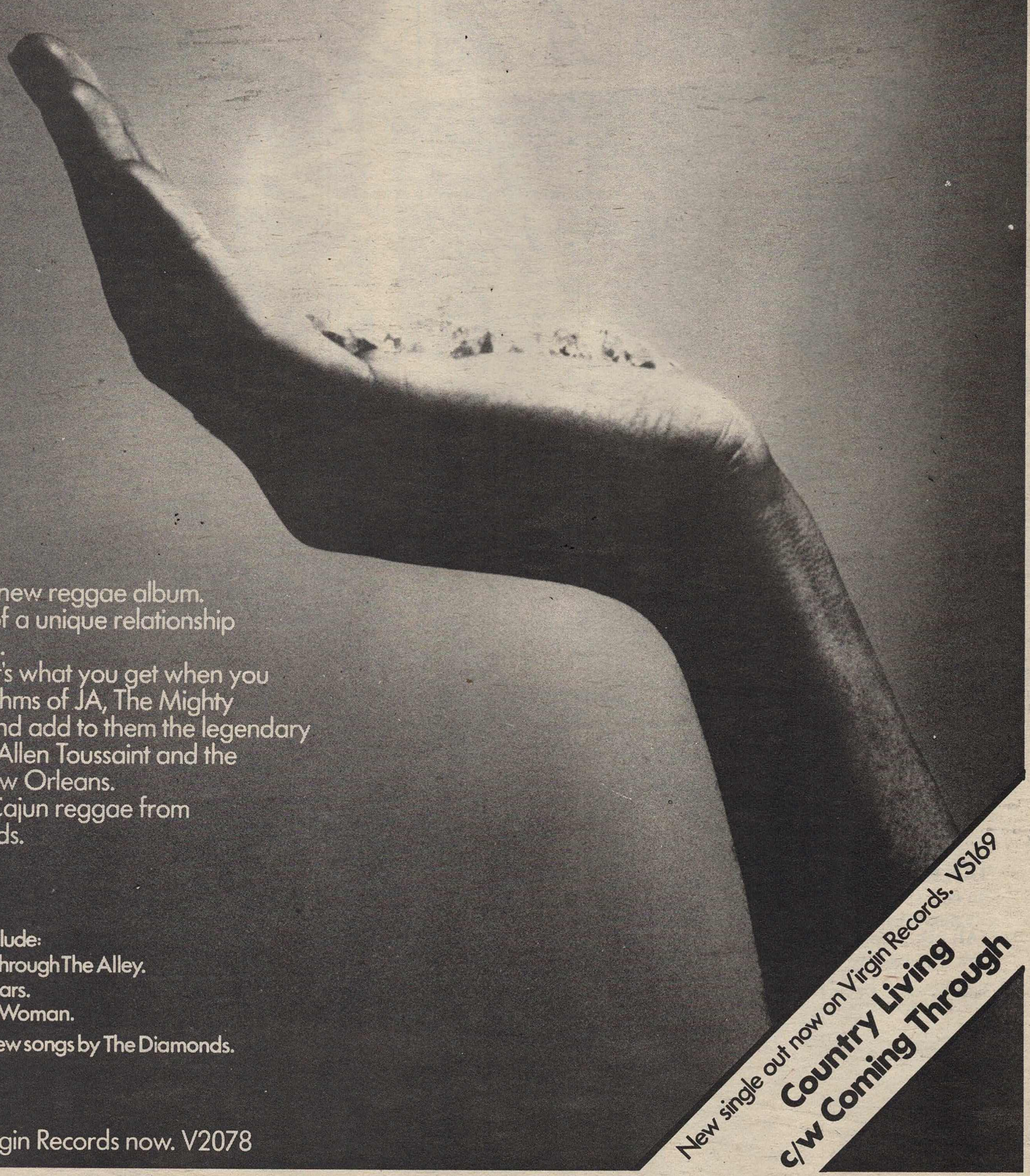
Ice on Fire



Ice on Fire.
It's not just a new reggae album.
It's the start of a unique relationship in rock music.
Because that's what you get when you take the rhythms of JA, The Mighty Diamonds and add to them the legendary influence of Allen Toussaint and the sound of New Orleans.
Ice on Fire. Cajun reggae from The Diamonds.

The 12 Tracks include:
Sneakin Sally Through The Alley.
Tracks Of My Tears.
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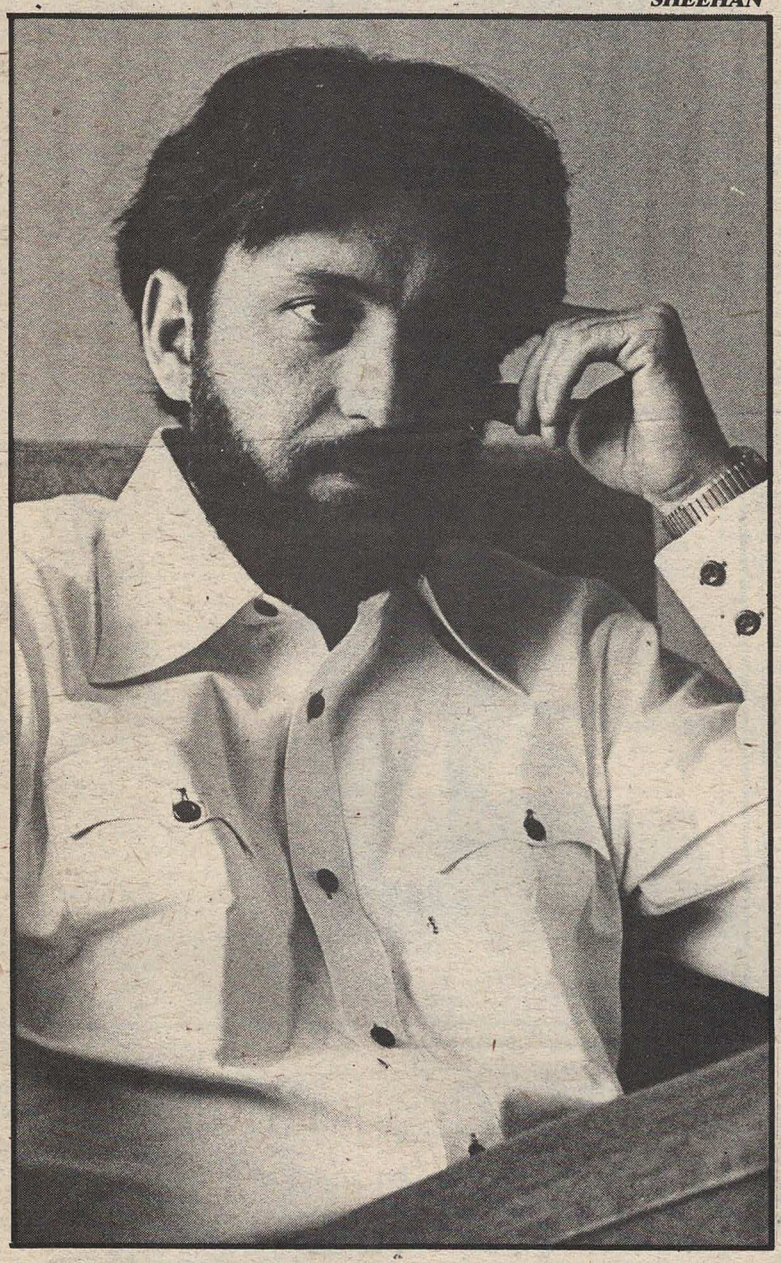
And 5 brand new songs by The Diamonds.

On Virgin Records now. V2078

New single out now on Virgin Records. VS169
Country Living
c/w Coming Through

"The Monkees didn't break up . . . the TV contract ran out." Pic: TOM SHEEHAN



NESMITH: IT'S ALL IN THE CONSCIOUSNESS

HE OFFERS me the only available ashtray.

"You don't smoke?" A languorous shrug.

"Filthy habit?" He wouldn't know, he's never smoked.

There's no way you can come straight out and ask a loquaciously grandiloquent gentleman like Michael Nesmith whether or not the current rumours concerning the reformation of The Monkees are so much eyewash, and not feel pretty stupid.

After all, he's cosily tucked away in a Kensington hotel to talk about his hit single "Rio" and he has long since proved himself an idiosyncratic solo artist with his own (small) devoted following.

He was the misfit Monkee (the tall, skinny one with the woolly hat) and I don't want to offend him. I could attempt a circuitous route, ask him about Darwin (not entirely inappropriate considering this Monkee's musical evolution) but then we'd probably still be there.

But, bless him, he mentions them first so I casually enquire about Mickey Dolenz's recent outbursts.

"Oh well, you've been having rumours since the show stopped."

He's smiling and appears to be wanly good-humoured, but that amiable Texan drawl can be deceptive.

"We're not getting back together. The only way The Monkees would get back together was if we did a show — that's feasible, but unlikely. You can't get The Monkees back together as a rock'n'roll group — that would be like Raymond Burr opening up a law practice."

So is he going to punch Dolenz in the mouth?

"Not me. Every once in a while Mickey will put The Monkees back together. I tell him 'I'll deny it. He says 'Well, OK'."

Doesn't that miff him?

"Why should it? It would be a waste of my consciousness."

If I had a fiver for every time Nesmith uses the word 'consciousness' or diminutives thereof I'd be able to stand the London Symphony Orchestra a drink.

Is he a cosmic cowboy or a pendantic old fart?

Certainly his last two concert appearances in this country have owed more to a prayer meeting, a master preaching to his brethren, than to rock'n'roll.

Some people find him vaguely patronising but I think he's more amenably disdainful, seeming wilfully to take the hard road. It's difficult to imagine many people relating to his austere "Prison" project (which Island have recently made available, together with the book).

"That's the same dialogue I had with RCA when they put out 'Magnetic South'. The term country-rock wasn't invented then so they couldn't categorise it, and neither could the radio programmers.

"They're not interested in playing a record if it might cost them listeners. They might lose the 7-Up account. But I'm not making things hard for myself. I just realise that it takes time for these things to come home."

So does he write, primarily, for himself?

"No. I'm really interested in contributing and having my works be useful. But I'm not prepared to compromise, to work toward a standard that I don't think is valid."

Most of his work (Excluding "The Prison" and his new album — which is probably the most accessible music he's yet recorded) has been steeped in C & W, employing it as an entirely indigenous form of American folk music. It's difficult to equate the ex-woolly-hatted buffoon with the trim, clean-cut country-style singer.

"The country-style is something the press have labelled. It's not a conscious effort. I grew up in Texas, and that's bound to weave its way into the music. If you listen to the music you'll see it's all very filmic. You say it's C&W bar stuff."

"I didn't mean it derogatorily.

"I understand. Have you ever been to the American Southwest?"

Never.

"Any idea of what it may look like?"

Only from the movies.

"That's the only place it exists. Western heroes — the movies. All that American mythology, is what those records are about. So your concept of it as C&W is that filmic thing, that visual capaciousness of the music.

"What happens when you listen to the music is that a film plays out in your head. That's what happens to me, so it's bound to happen to somebody else."

He laughs.

"With 'The Prison', a book was as close as I could get to a film at that point. Now we've got this . . ."

He indicates a video playback machine.

"On my new album and on 'Rio' I'm filming it, I'm actually *making* the movies now."

Which you've consciously (woops) been heading for?

"Yeah. All this time. Seven years. But you can't do it in the Hollywood community because you're talking to people who don't have any musical consciousness. I wanted to take the music and let the visuals grow out of it."

We watch his "Rio" film on the video software. It's prodigiously imaginative, encompassing multifarious pastiche styles from cinema and TV. Everything is included, from zoom to nuts, and the music is brilliantly married to the film. "We used some very advanced techniques, mixing film and video and editing on video and computer.

"It's a first effort, but I'm real proud of it because it's a *good first effort.*"

His extraordinarily diverse output since The Monkees' demise suggests he may have been somewhat schizophrenic at that time.

"I didn't feel that way. Now I don't remember a lot about it. It's a decade ago. But it was first and foremost and only a TV show. It had this cross-fertilisation of the two mediums because you and I still differentiate between music and film. There really isn't any difference and time will prove that."

He cites people like Bob Rafelson, Paul Mazursky, Jack Nicholson, Peter Fonda, Dennis Hopper, Hendrix, Nilsson and Zappa as emergents from the Monkees environment.

"So it's not unusual for me to be clipping right along doing nice work, too, because it was a tremendous training ground, a positive experience, and people who don't see it as such are missing the point.

"The thing that appears to make it exploitative is that so much money can be made from it: buy the record, buy a toy, buy a doll.

"But it wasn't anything but a TV show. It wasn't a musical force. The Beatles were a musical force, four cats who got together a very high musical consciousness that blew us all away.

"The Monkees were about 35 people who put together a hot TV show. People ask why did The Monkees break up? The Monkees didn't break up. The TV contract was over and we split."

Before I leave he hands me a copy of his new album, "From A Radio Engine To The Photon Wing".

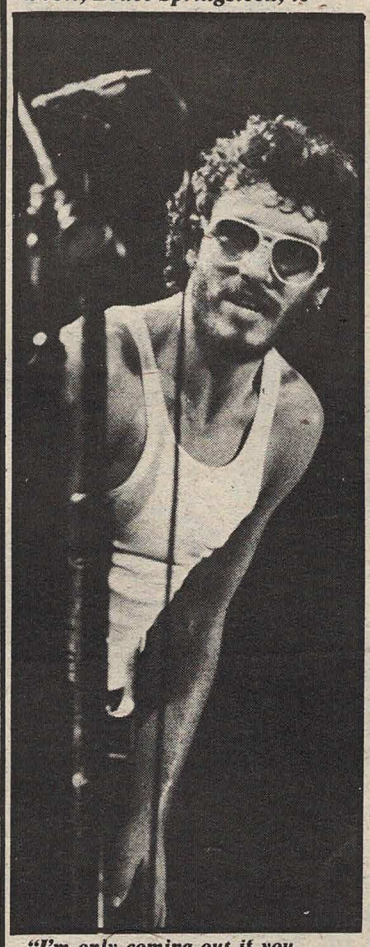
Ah, that was one of the questions I *wasn't* going to ask you — what the title means.

"Oh good. Don't."

□ MONTY SMITH

SPRINGSTEEN SINGS FOR SOMEONE ELSE'S SUPPER

THE POSSIBILITY of having his recording career put on hold indefinitely — until such time as litigation involving himself and former manager and co-producer Mike Appel has been resolved — has forced 1975's future of rock-'n'roll, Bruce Springsteen, to resort to unnatural practices.



"I'm only coming out if you promise not to bootleg me".

The problem is that since the hysteria that accompanied the release of "Born To Run", and the promotional brouhaha that subsequently flared, a large cult following has sprung up around Springsteen.

Such partisan support is a bootlegger's dream, and illegal albums, with titles such as "Hot Coals From The Fiery Furnace", "The Jersey Devil", "Flat Top And Pin Drop" and "You Can Trust Your Car To The Man Who Wears The Star", have been legion in recent months.

Hence, given his current contractual hiatus, Springsteen is reluctant to preview any new compositions in his stage show simply to benefit the lurking bootleggers. And though he does have three albums on catalogue from which he drew his material, he is probably reluctant to retread the same songs nightly.

His solution to this dilemma has been to increase the quota of oldies in his show.

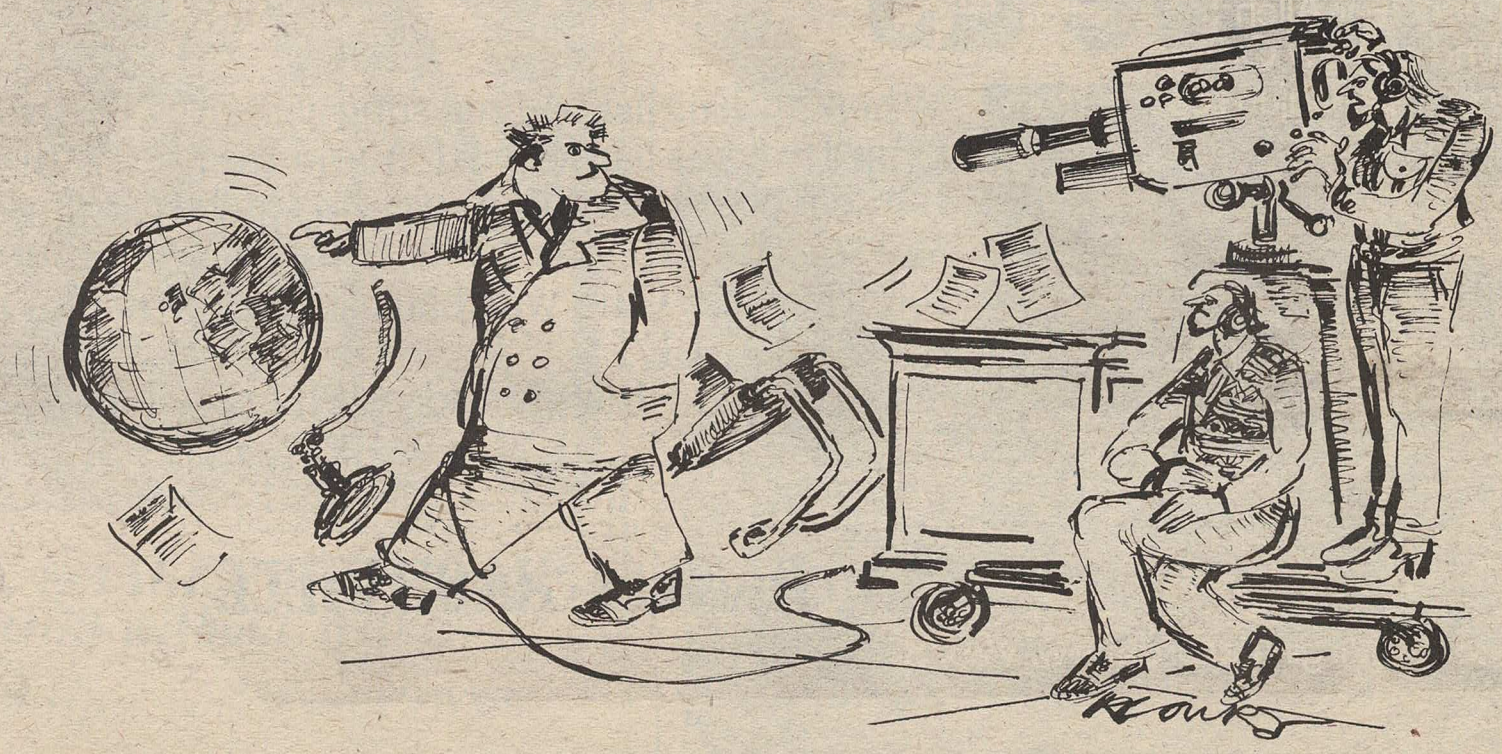
While this has delighted hard-core fans who regard Springsteen as an archetypal '60s artist working in the '70s, it has hardly solved Springsteen's problem.

The bootleggers are still making a killing.

A new bootleg album has recently appeared under the counters of certain U.S. emporia. It's Bruce and the E-Street Band's own 'Moondog Matinee', and the album contains the following tracks: "Wear My Ring Around Your Neck", "It's My Life", "It's Gonna Work Out Fine", "Up On The Roof", "Then He (She) Kissed Me", "When You Walk In The Room", "Goin' Back", "Pretty Flamingo", "Oh! Carol", "Quarter To Three", and a lengthy Mitch Ryder medley featuring parts of "Devil With The Blue Dress On", "Good Golly Miss Molly", "C.C. Rider" and "Jenny Jenny".

□ ROY CARR

LOWRY



"The punk rockers are yesterday's news, man. Patrick Moore's the only genuinely disturbing performer on television."

THE VELDA TAPES

SPECIAL FRIEND OF J. ROTTEN REVEALS ALL (SHOCK)

UNDERNEATH the thick black lines and heavily rouged cheeks there might well be a stunning female trying to get out. It's so hard to tell my dears, for Jordan does such a good job of covering up any good features she may possess. Even her hair (brown at the roots, white at the tips) is engulfed in a thick layer of lacquer.

Jordan (real name Pamela) is something of a star. Although she's a shop assistant (in Seditionaries, the shop owned by Sex Pistols' manager Malcolm McClaren), there's little that is mere routine in her life.

Because of her looks and associations with the New Wave, when she went to America recently she was given the star treatment and even got a spot on television.

Johnny Rotten is a close friend (yes, he does have some) and if he's bored, down, or just plain fed up, invariably it is Jordan he phones to cheer his flagging spirits.

I met Jordan at the shop, situated, ironically enough, next door to a Conservative Club, but there was little conservatism about her as she strode purposefully across the road, seeming oblivious to the open-mouthed stares of Joe Public.

Her obsession is fashion. So every incident in her life (she is 20) is referred to via associations with clothes worn and make-up applied.

School was her pink period ("I had bright pink hair"). Harrods (yes, Harrods) was her green period. America? Well that was when she was into rubber.

Spring '77 finds her clad mostly in black. A black jacket resembling a straight-jacket, all zips and bits. Black trousers (more zips and bits), and black suede boots. The only break is vivid pink rouge and brightly coloured lipstick.

This strange fashion-conscious lady originated from Seaford, a quiet backwater near Brighton. Her parents weren't into fashion or theatre, but by the age of seven it was obvious their offspring was.

"My father," says Jordan in a well-educated voice," was a clerk. My mother was a barmaid." (Both are now retired.)

Neither parent exactly approves of the way their daughter dresses:

"They'll never get used to the fact that I didn't turn out the way they wanted."

And her mode of dress has also presented numerous problems with, er, the opposite sex.

"I've been walking out with people, totally ordinary people, and they've freaked out just going down the street with me."

Even the police have shown an interest in Jordan.

"They once tried to arrest me for being indecently dressed in public."

And what was the sweet girl wearing at the time?

"Stilettos, stockings with huge holes, see-through knickers and see-through bra."

Ah, I see.

Prior to Seditionaries' Jordan worked for a time in Eastbourne — "Where I dressed the same". She later worked at The Way In at Harrods, where "they were very good and never said anything about my green lipstick or make up; I was treated very well."

She *adores* working for Malcolm. "I'm very involved in the shop and have great faith in the clothes. Vivian (McClaren's girlfriend) and Malcolm are the two most creative people around."

Jordan was one of the first people to ever clap eyes on the Pistols.

"I remember watching them rehearse in Hammersmith before John was in the band. He was just a customer then."

And as a close associate of Mr Rotten's, can she tell when he is putting on an act? It has been suggested that Mr Rotten deliberately does so whenever a member of the press is present.

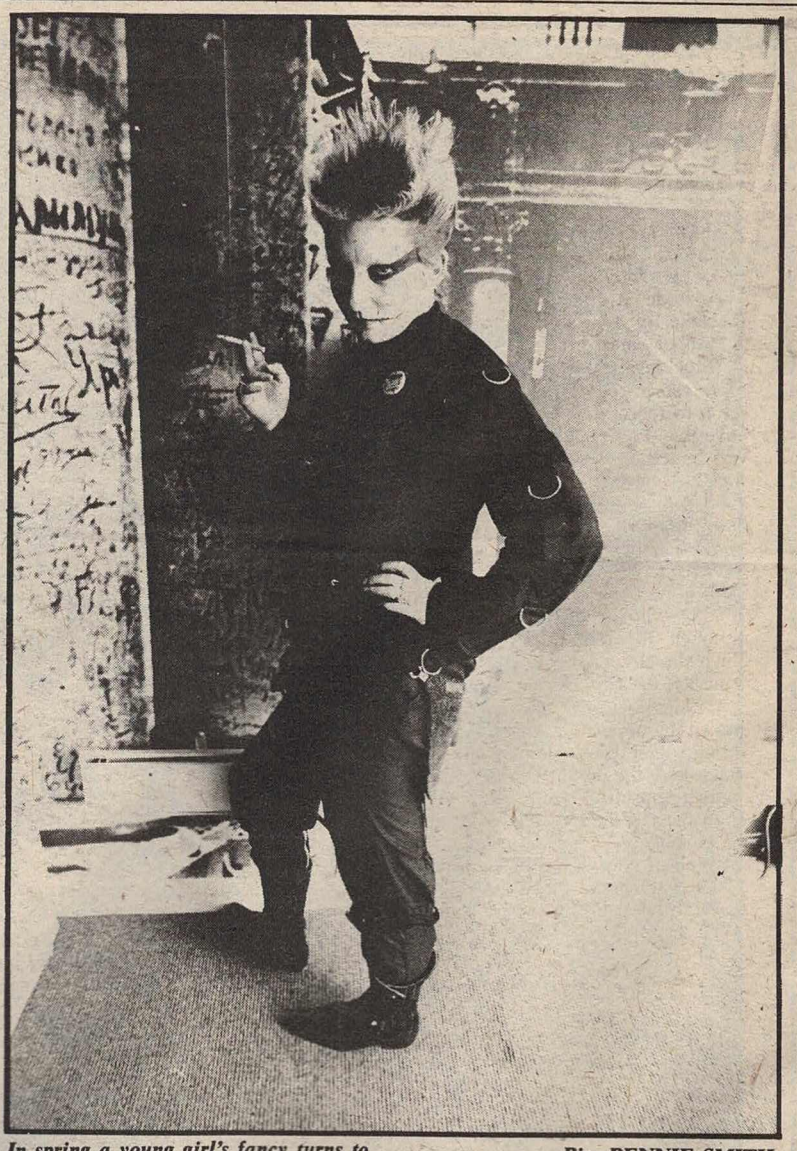
"He *never* puts on an act — he won't compromise. If he feels like spitting he'll spit."

Jordan sees Seditionaries as "the hub of the situation that young people are in." And she adds: "We get other bands in the shop to get the clothes the Pistols wear. Mr. Big even came in to buy vinyl trousers."

For some obscure reason Jordan does not like Queen.

"If I ever see Freddie Mercury in public no doubt I'll tip something over him," she confides.

What I wondered has Freddie done to incur such wrath?



In spring a young girl's fancy turns to . . . *Pic: PENNIE SMITH*

When we signed Chip Hawkes... we knew that he'd leave us

ALBUM PL25044

When an English singer-songwriter of the calibre of Chip Hawkes came to RCA and said he wanted to make a country album, we did the best thing possible. We sent him to Nashville, with our compliments. Six months later Chip was back, with one hell of an album. 'NASHVILLE' is that album-Listen and you'll know what we mean.

Special guest on the Twiggy tour

Croydon, Fairfield Hall,	April 15	Bristol, Colston,	April 22
Birmingham, Odeon,	April 16	Manchester, Palace,	April 24
Liverpool, Empire,	April 17	Brighton, Dome,	April 25
		London, Royal Albert Hall,	April 26

Chip Hawkes-'NASHVILLE'

RCA

"Actually, I've never met him, only the drummer. It's just that they cater for a certain kind of people — hippy college people — and I feel violent towards him. I don't like what he's doing."

Jordan is not exactly modest when talking of *her* success when *she* visited America recently. "I was a *knock-out,*" she says. "There were pictures of me in *Woman's World Daily* and I even made Channel 3 news. That was the time I was wearing rubber . . ."

Rubber what, precisely?

"Stockings, skirt . . ."

Not surprisingly, boyfriends never seem to feature in Jordan's life. Nor have they done so in the past. "I was very much an outcast at school. If it was 'kiss, chase' they'd run away from me. No boy would touch me. Still, I didn't really want their attention. But I was very hard up for people on my wavelength."

Now, of course, there are many others who share the outlook, although it's still difficult to walk down the street without getting rude remarks or gaping stares.

"I remember once getting on a train and sitting opposite a woman with her young son. First she stared and then she asked the boy, 'Is that woman opposite upsetting you?' He nodded, Then she asked if I would kindly leave the carriage.

"Well of course I didn't!

"Next thing she asked me was if I was a stripper. So I turned round and asked her, 'Do you think strippers look like me?' And I also said that if I had a son like that I'd throw him out the door."

Back on the subject of Rotten, Jordan claims: "He doesn't have actual girlfriends — he's not really interested in permanent girlfriends. But he does need someone to pour his thoughts out to. He'll ring up and say, 'Please come over and keep me sane.'

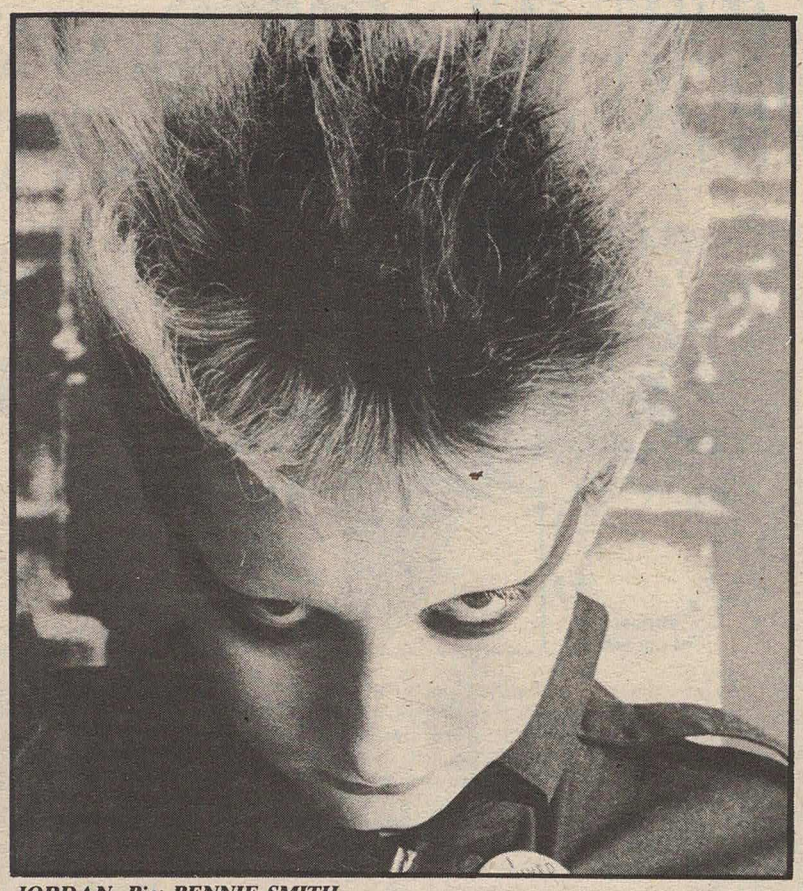
"He said to me he liked me better than anyone because he liked my clothes and he felt I had the potential to say what I wanted and be very demonstrative."

And on these evenings, how (dare I ask?) do they spend their time?

"We listen to an awful lot of reggae. John really likes reggae. It's the only thing we ever dance to."

So now we know, my angels.

□ VELDA DAQUIRI



JORDAN. Pic: PENNIE SMITH

GET A JOB AT THE DOLE DISCO . . .

THE CONCEPT of dole queue rock was taken a step further recently by a young youth worker in the London council borough of Haringey who is combining a disco with an employment exchange to try and help the unemployed young of the area find work.

Oliver Dines, 22, spends the week contacting local employees for details of jobs available, prints them on duplicated job sheets and hands them out at his Tuesday evening disco at the Rainbow Rooms, Manor House.

The scheme has the backing of the local Community Relations Council, whose spokesman, Mr. Crawford, told me that Dines was now getting up to 40 job offers a week.

Haringey, although not one of the worst affected areas in the country, still has unemployment problems, particularly because of the high density of black kids.

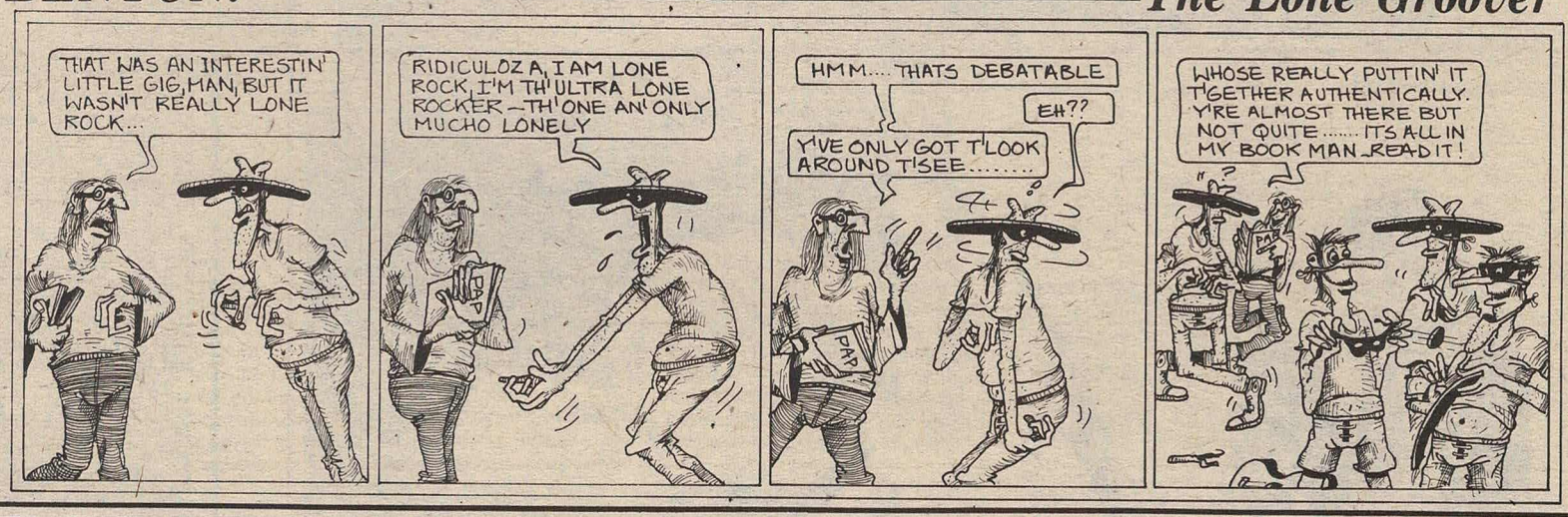
The importance of schemes like this were underlined by a recent report from the Manpower Services Commission, who are proposing a plan whereby jobless teenagers would be paid £17 a week to take part in a series of work projects and training programmes.

Their alarming long-range forecasts estimate that the peak unemployment figures of 450,000 amongst 16—18-year-olds for this year are unlikely to change for another five years at least.

(Tax exiles take note.)

□ DICK TRACY

BENYON: The Lone Groover


THAT WAS AN INTERESTIN' LITTLE GIG, MAN, BUT IT WASN'T REALLY LONE ROCK...
RIDICULOZA, I AM LONE ROCK, I'M TH' ULTRA LONE ROCKER — TH' ONE AN' ONLY MUCHO LONELY
HMM.... THATS DEBATABLE
EH??
Y'VE ONLY GOT T'LOOK AROUND T'SEE.....
PARP
WHOSE REALLY PUTTIN' IT T'GETHER AUTHENTICALLY. Y'RE ALMOST THERE BUT NOT QUITE..... IT'S ALL IN MY BOOK MAN. READ IT!

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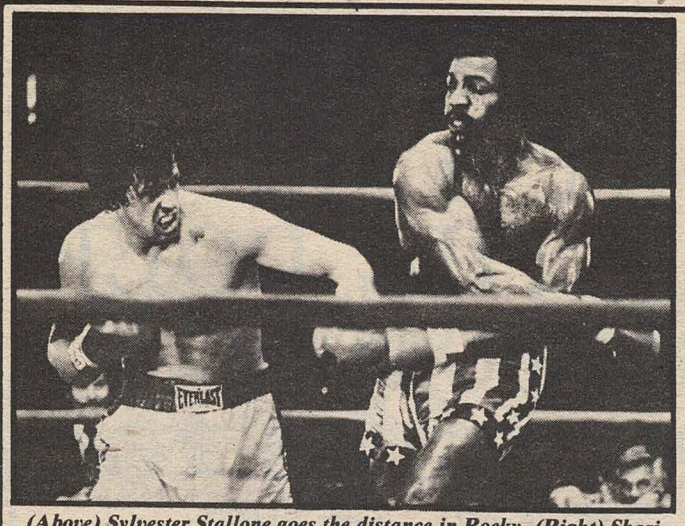
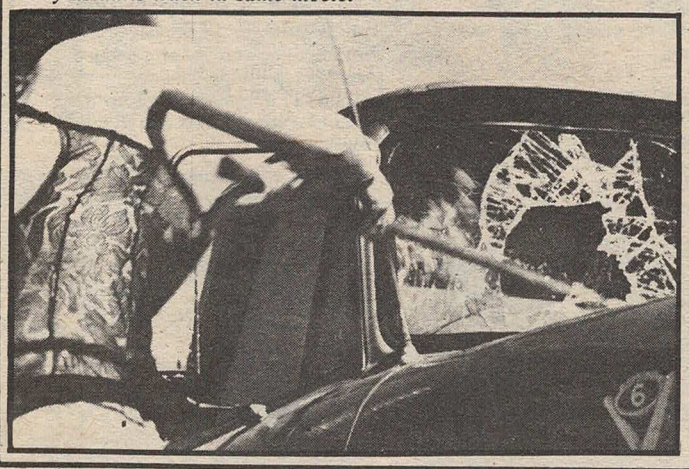


(Above) Sylvester Stallone goes the distance in Rocky. (Right) Shari Eubank comes on mammalian in Super Vixens. (Below) Lightly clad lady assaults truck in same movie.



SILVER SCREEN

Rocky (A)

Directed by John G. Avildsen. Starring Sylvester Stallone, Talia Shire.

WHO SAYS the age of heroes is dead and gone? Who says the American dream is a nightmare? Not Rocky.

Our story begins in downtown Philadelphia. Loser territory. We see Rocky punching bags in a seedy gym, Rocky hustling debts for the sleazy local loan shark, at night going home alone to his crummy ghetto bedsit with only his turtles for company. It's not a pretty sight.

Enter Apollo Creed, flash spade heavyweight champ. Creed has a big-money championship bout set up when his challenger pulls out. In the true spirit of American showmanship, Creed has the idea of fighting a complete unknown and lands on a no-hoper with a flashy monicker, the Italian Stallion, Rocky.

Needless to say, the fleshy-jowled promoter figures his suave black champ will floor this crumbum in Round 3 so everyone can go home early. What the hick bums don't realise, however, is that beneath his no-luck exterior, Rocky is a MAN. For him this fight is the Big One and he isn't about to flush it down the drain. He begins training and training hard. Down in the frozen meat factory he works out pummelling solid sides of beef. Early morning sees him pounding the Philadelphia pavement, pushing himself to the limit, getting ready for the fight of his life.

Rocky's lovelife begins to flourish too. His casual affair with the insecure petshop girl (Talia Shire) deepens into true love and we see her gradually shed her stutter and towrags and blossom into a beauty.

By the time the big day comes, Rocky's set. He doesn't plan to win but he's sure as hell going to stay the distance. Creed starts out hard but come Round 2 Rocky floors him with a furious jawshot and the champ begins to realise this ain't going to be no third round cop-out. Rocky's out there to fight for all the years of frustration and pain, for his very life.

Okay, its sentimental stuff but it makes it. Sylvester Stallone was hungry when he made this movie and he puts all of himself into it. The result is a loser's dream, the ultimate in wish-fulfilment fantasies.

Dick Tracy

Supervixens (X)

Directed by Russ Meyer Starring Shari Eubank, Charles Napier and Charles Pitt

LIKE RUSS MEYER, I enjoy obsessive grossness and *Supervixens* (despite pruning by the indelicate hands of our censor) fairly ODs on comic book sex and cartoon style violence. Mayer's robustly childish sense of humour is evident in every frame (since he's editor, cinematographer, writer, producer *and* director, that is inevitable) and the sheer audacity of his absurdly comic situations make it hard to resist.

Because he chooses to work in the sex-comedy field (he made the classic *Beyond The Valley Of The Dolls*), Meyer is generally considered to be little more than a purveyor of soft-porn nonsense. Yet, far from being a shambling slob in a pool of drool, he's an astute film-maker whose work resembles that of a particularly deranged Mel Brooks.

In *Supervixens* he perfectly captures and neatly ridicules the American fetish for buxom-built women and custom-built cars, and the omnipresent phallic imagery (from car-parts to cacti) is overwhelming. The heroines are half-a-dozen astonishingly pneumatic women who each find clean-limbed Clint Ramsey (Charles Pitts) irresistible. A former gas-pump jockey for ex-Nazi Martin Bormann (it's that kind of movie), Clint is on the run from fascist cop Harry Sledge (Charles Napier, very funny) who, despite his muscular prowess, is a dud in bed. When venomously ridiculed by a disappointed bedmate, Harry berserkly murders her in a blood-filled bath.

As Clint starts living an idyllic life with Supervixen (Shari Eubank), the scene is set for a climactic confrontation between Good Clint and Evil Harry which (as each of Harry's ever more elaborate traps backfire) becomes a humanised version of the *Roadrunner* cartoons.

Here the censor steps in and ludicrously alters the sense of the sequence, making it far 'worse' than the original in that the audience can but assume Harry has placed a dynamite stick *up* Vixen's vagina rather than *in front:* "What you need is a long fuse and a big bang."

Despite the cuts, *Supervixens* remains a nippily-paced, tasteless comedy with more going for it than against. By placing his camera beneath the ladies' (bikini'd) crotches and (bared) breasts, Meyer creates an effect which is simultaneous funny and imposing. I guess normal women just don't figure in his wonderful world of wobblies.

Monty Smith

Stand Up Virgin Soldiers (AA)

Directed by Norman Cohen Starring Robin Askwith, George Layton and Nigel Davenport

AT LEAST the producers kept one promise. When they signed Robin Askwith for the lead role, they swore blind this wouldn't resemble a *Confessions* picture. They're right. *Stand Up Virgin Soldiers* is more like a limp hybrid of TV's *Get Some In* and *It Ain't Half Hot Mum* with barrack-room language.

It is Singapore in 1950 and the reluctant recruits have just been informed that conscription has been increased from 18 months to two years. The main source of amusement is "a quick shit and shave and down to the village." There is located the Golden Grape Club, where the resident whores are possessed of capitalistic instincts but little knowledge of English ("You lotten flucking riar"). Mind you, Askwith and George Layton (as our less than intrepid heroes) don't fare much better.

Author Leslie Thomas has adapted his own book to the screen with a surprisingly heavy hand, giving most of the characters redundant expository comments, remarks which merely tell us what we've already seen. Coupled with the director's misplaced faith in static reaction shots, it makes for an exceedingly flat film (ie the sort of thing you'd see on television), looking as though it were shot on a giant studio lot.

There are a couple of neat cameos by Irene Handl as a snobbish welfare worker in Edna Everage sunglasses forlornly reminiscing about her days "in Injah"; and John Le Mesurier, imperturbably vague as the regimental colonel, longing for the cricket season to begin and for his wife to stop sending him home-made jam.

The only others to emerge with any credit are Edward Woodward as the cowardly Sgt Wellbeloved ("Real war is shit and bullets, not a load of poncey Communist guerillas hanging about in trees") and Warren Mitchell as a whining Welsh reservist on recall ("Will you look at these ablutions — they're more like a bloody shithole").

Actually, so many of the film's scenes take place in the camp toilets that one is forced to equate conscription with full-scale masturbation. Perhaps that is why Nigel Davenport's Sgt Driscoll is awaiting pensioning off for "slowly going blind".

Monty Smith

PETER HAMMILL an open letter...

Peter Hammill
Over (Charisma)
The new album CAS 1125

... and an open heart. By now you may have read reviews of the new Peter Hammill album 'OVER', a collection of eight love songs. As ever, this latest offering from Van Der Graaf Generator's guiding light has been followed by an enormous amount of critical controversy

NME's Nick Kent writes: "... well away from the identikit terrain of good ole rock and roll or plushy veleveteen singer-songwriter introspection"

Tim Lott of SOUNDS: "Angst and introspection, always on the borders of Hammill's previous work, reach conclusion with 'OVER'. What marks Hammill out as different is that the music is just as anguished, cracked, anarchic and effective as the words"

In NATIONAL ROCK STAR Stephen Lavers says: "...different from anything he's ever done before ... effective because Hammill seems to be experiencing the emotions he's written about, while singing the song."

Inevitably, it seems, Peter Hammill's work attracts diverse and fiercly conflicting reaction — not least from his own firm following.

For what it's worth we believe that 'OVER' represents something of a milestone. On it Peter Hammill has managed to write down and interpret musically a description of love from a *man's* viewpoint — at least as effective in its way as Joni Mitchell's most eloquently feminist pieces. If at times the resulting songs are a little raw or uncomfortably direct it is because he's discarded the metaphor or machismo imagery behind which male songwriters have previously hidden. As the critics have hinted, Peter has lived through all that he expresses in this album.

Whatever your own reaction, you cannot fail to respond.

Listen — and we think you'll agree that, by any standard, this is a courageous and, ultimately, uplifting album.

You can hear an excerpt from Peter Hammill's 'OVER' by dialling 01-499 9441 anytime.

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SIDESWIPE

NEW FACE FOR UK COMICS?

ROARING WITH RAGE, SPITTING WITH HATE, THE 150 YEAR OLD MONSTER HIT THE GROUND IN A FURY...
GOT IT!
ROLLING OVER AND OVER SHE SMASHED INTO THE SALOON...
WHAT'S ALL THAT NOISE?
EARL REAGAN GRABBED THE DOCTOR.
6.00 A.M. FRIDAY JANUARY 1ST, 1999 "BLACK FRIDAY'T THE PAPERS SCREAMED A TERRIFYING HEADLINE!
Daily Mirror
WAR WITH THE EAST!
VOLGANS INVADE WESTERN EUROPE!
ON A THOUSAND-MILE FRONT, THE NATO ARMIES WERE FLUNG BACK BY HORDES OF VOLGAN TANKS!
I'M OUT OF BULLETS— SO IT'S BACK TO THE STONE AGE!
JUSTICE H.Q., THE SCENE WAS WATCHED ON SCANNER SCREENS. CONTROLLER SPOKE TO JUDGE DREDD...
JUDGE DREDD! YOU ARE ORDERED TO FOLLOW THE BROTHERHOOD INTO THEIR TERRITORY, BRING BACK THE MAYOR'S SON— THEY'VE CAPTURED HIM!
SWARMS OF VOLGAN FIGHTERS BLACKENED THE SKY!
DEEP INSIDE ASIA, FROM UNDERGROUND SILOS, VOLGAN MISSILES WERE LAUNCHED—ARMED WITH THERMO-NUCLEAR WARHEADS!
IN HOMES THROUGHOUT BRITAIN, THE PEOPLE WERE TOLD THE HORRIFYING NEWS.
THEY OUTNUMBER US TEN TO ONE! WE CAN'T STOP THEM!
STEREOPANORAMA
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A THOUSAND YEARS — BRITAIN HAS BEEN INVADED! PARATROOPER LANDINGS HAVE BEEN REPORTED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. AND NEWS IS JUST COMING IN OF A NUCLEAR STRIKE IN THE MIDLANDS!

Have you noticed what your little brother's reading?

DID you ever wonder why the dinosaurs became extinct?

I expect you imagined, as I did, that it was some combination of environment, evolution or climatic change.

That just shows how wrong you can be.

The real reason the big lizards vanished off the face of the earth was that a bunch of violent, unshaven cowboys from the 23rd century systematically slaughtered them, using an elaborate automated system called the fleshdozer, to feed the meat hungry masses of 300 years hence.

At least, that's the story according to a new children's comic called *2000 A.D.*

Not that the dinosaur hunting cowboys have it all their own way.

By issue five the cretaceous period has started to stike back. A gang of tyrannosaurs have invaded Carver City, the cowboys' main drinking haunt, a kind of Wyatt Earp Dodge City enclosed in a plastic dome.

For five lavishly detailed pages of illustration, the big reptiles, led by a particulary unpleasant and vengeful female called Old One-Eye, munch, chomp, nibble and generally snack on every human in sight, including a fair sprinkling of suitably nubile and underclad dancehall girls.

Violence in children's comics has been the subject of regular outcries and investigations since the notorious Dr. Wertham published his book *Seduction Of The Innocent* in the mid-'50s.

Wertham went after the American comics with the same self-righteous witch-hunting fervour that inspired Joe McCarthy and Richard Nixon when they went after the red menace.

He not only purported to prove that reading comics could be damaging to the mental health of young persons but, digging even deeper, found sinister homosexual implications in both *Batman* and *Wonder Woman.*

Almost singlehanded, Dr. Wertham managed to wipe out the classic, golden-age horror comics and established the Comics Code authority that outlawed the depiction of nudity, blood, any sex whatsoever, and every possible triumph of evil over good.

Although the Wertham witch-hunt concentrated primarily on U.S. comic books, its repercussions were felt on this side of the Atlantic.

The government of the time was stampeded into putting a total ban on the import of so-called horror comics, particularly the now legendary E.C. publications like *Tales From The Crypt* and *Vault Of Horror*

Round about the same time as Dr. Wertham was doing his worst, a British clergyman, the Rev. Marcus Morris, founded the *Eagle.*

Eagle was everything that was exemplary in a children's comic.

It was the kind of publication that parents felt perfectly safe in buying for their kids. It was also sufficiently original to hold its readers' attention.

From 1951 until the start of the '60s, the *Eagle* and its companion papers *Girl* (for girls, needless to say) and *Robin* (for the under-fives) boomed.

Nothing lasts for ever, though.

By the early '60s the spread of TV had become so complete that the upmarket comics like the *Eagle* and its imitators could no longer compete with *Maverick, Have Gun, Will Travel* and *77 Sunset Strip*

The kids stopped reading Dan Dare and began staring in tube-locked wonder.

One by one the full colour weeklies folded, and the *Beano* and *Dandy* were once again left to carry the torch along with American imports from Marvel and D.C.

All through the '60s there were various attempts to revive the English comics. Few met with any degree of respect. It took until well into the '70s to see anything like a renaissance of the genre.

Almost predictably, this renaissance used a solid rasing of the violence quotient to make its mark.

The spearhead of this new breed of rough tough publications were a set of highly explicit and technically accurate war comics.

The field leader was *Warlord* a 30 page, newsprint offering that featured action strips from just about every theatre of operations in World War II plus a couple from World War I.

The war context was somewhat limiting, however. It hardly exhausted the possibilities of the medium.

Action comics went one, if not two or three better, entirely in the direction of bigger, better and more bloody violence.

Action featured a cast of nastiness that ranged from Mafia hitmen to a man-eating great white shark.

Action appeared to fall into the trap of doing too much too soon. The newspapers got hold of the blood and gore angle, there was a minor furore, and *Action* was taken off the market for several weeks, then relaunched in cleaned-up form.

The fate of *Action,* however, didn't deter the editors of *2000 A.D.*

They have pulled out just about every stop on the level of the crushing, mutilating and spindling of human beings. Using the familiar 32 page, newsprint format, they have gone further in the direction of gratuitous violence.

The format may be cheap but, beyond that, no expense is spared to give the kids a somewhat unpleasant kind of jollies.

On average, at least one person dies horribly on every page. In issue five the visible body count runs as high as 38.

The methods of slaughter include close range shotgun blasts, the skull-crushing, power-assisted punches of a bionic secret agent, being crushed by a Kong-sized robot ape, swallowed by a swamp thing from Jupiter and turned into lunch for the previously mentioned tyrannosaurs.

2000 A.D. runs six regular strips.

Each edition opens with the intriguing story of "Invasion". This little gem is set in 1999. The Volgans, sinister eastern Europeans who bear an uncommon resemblance to Russians, invade the British Isles after dropping a 50 mega-ton bomb on the Midlands.

A sobbing lady newscaster, who happens to be a dead ringer for Angela Rippon, tells the country the bad news. King Charles III flees to Canada, while the Prime Minster (a Margaret Thatcher look-alike) is shot by a firing squad on the steps of St. Paul's.

But fear not. The British are not quite done for.

The working class hit back in the form of Bill Savage, a cockney lorry driver who seems to be based, appearance-wise, on the late Stanley Baker.

Savage comes home to discover that his wife and kids have been killed in the fighting. Understandably miffed at all this, he grabs his shotgun and commences a one-man vendetta against the invaders.

At the other end of the book, we find another one-man vendetta, Judge Dredd against crime.

The "Judge Dredd" strip puts forward the proposition that law and order in the mega-cities of 21st century America will be left to individuals called judges.

The judges are a team of sanctioned Dirty Harrys in black shiny S+M suits, skull-like helmets and enough badges to satisfy the most sartorially picky Hell's Angel.

The judges' function appears to be riding around on huge futuristic motorcycles, arbitrarily blowing away the bad guys, and thus streamlining the course of justice to a one-man judge, jury and executioner.

Keen, huh?

As if all this wasn't enough *2000 A.D.* also offers "Harlem Heroes", a bunch of b-a-a-d spades who play a lethal, airborne version of Rollerball; "M.A.C.H. 1", a homicidal, computer controlled secret agent; and "Flesh", the time-travelling dinosaur cowboys.

To the comic book purist, the shock of mayhem and violence pales into insignificance, however when compared to the atrocity that's been committed on Dan Dare.

That's the centre spread colour strip in *2000 A.D.* It's Dan Dare, but like no Dan Dare you ever saw before

For those of you who don't remember, Dan Dare was something of a cult during the '50s. For any small boy, it was what you were into when you were too young for Eddie Cochran.

Exquisitely drawn by Frank Hampson and Frank Bellamy, and heavy with scientific accuracy, Dan Dare's battles with his arch enemy, the Mekon, became classics among SF strip cartoons.

In tune with times, the original Dan Dare was honest, upright and so gung-ho that he almost creaked when he walked.

He was a kind of space-going Biggles who defended faith, truth and righteousness wherever in the universe they might be threatened.

The new Dan Dare is an entirely different figure from his predecessor. He seems to be a rather odd combination of Clint Eastwood and Bowie in his Ziggy Stardust phase.

During his absence from the media, he also appears to have developed a definite anti-authoritarian attitude, and a taste for beating that was never shared by the original.

In the first issue there's a rather thin explanation for the change.

"Dare suffered terrible injuries in a desperate attempt to save the first Orbital Power Station. Unable to rebuild his shattered body, surgeons put Dare into suspended animation until the 22nd century. With the superior knowledge of that age, Dan Dare is brought back to life with a new body, a new face and a whole new universe to master!"

The difference between the new and old Dan Dares would seem to be a pointer to the way attitudes have changed over the last 25 years.

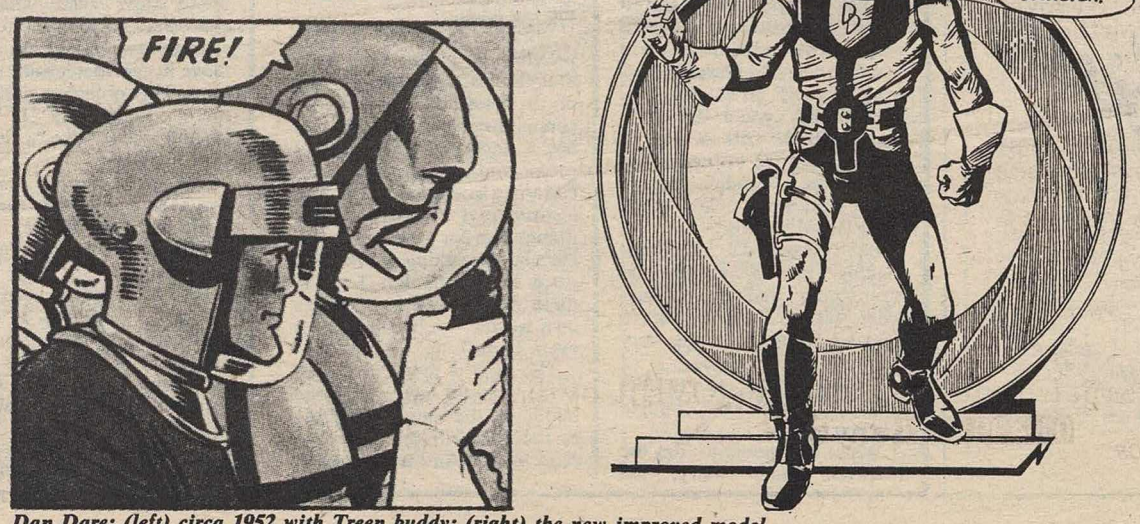
Without getting into a last paragraph sermonette, the whole existence of this particular comic is a pointer to changing attitudes.

It's the first kids' comic that has gone, unashamedly, into the random, directionless violence that's become such a part of current entertainment.

It was almost inevitable that someone should start producing a comic for the junior blank generation. It's only logical that when their older brother and sister have The Ramones, the Stretford End and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre,* the under-12s should want something like *2000 A.D.*

MICK FARREN

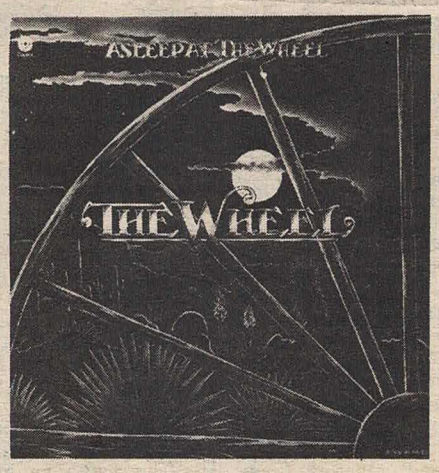
and see what they've done to Dan Dare . . . .



Dan Dare: (left) circa 1952 with Treen buddy; (right) the new improved model.

Can you imagine what happens when nine guys an' one girl get together for a good time-

it's all on The Wheel the latest album from Asleep At The Wheel.



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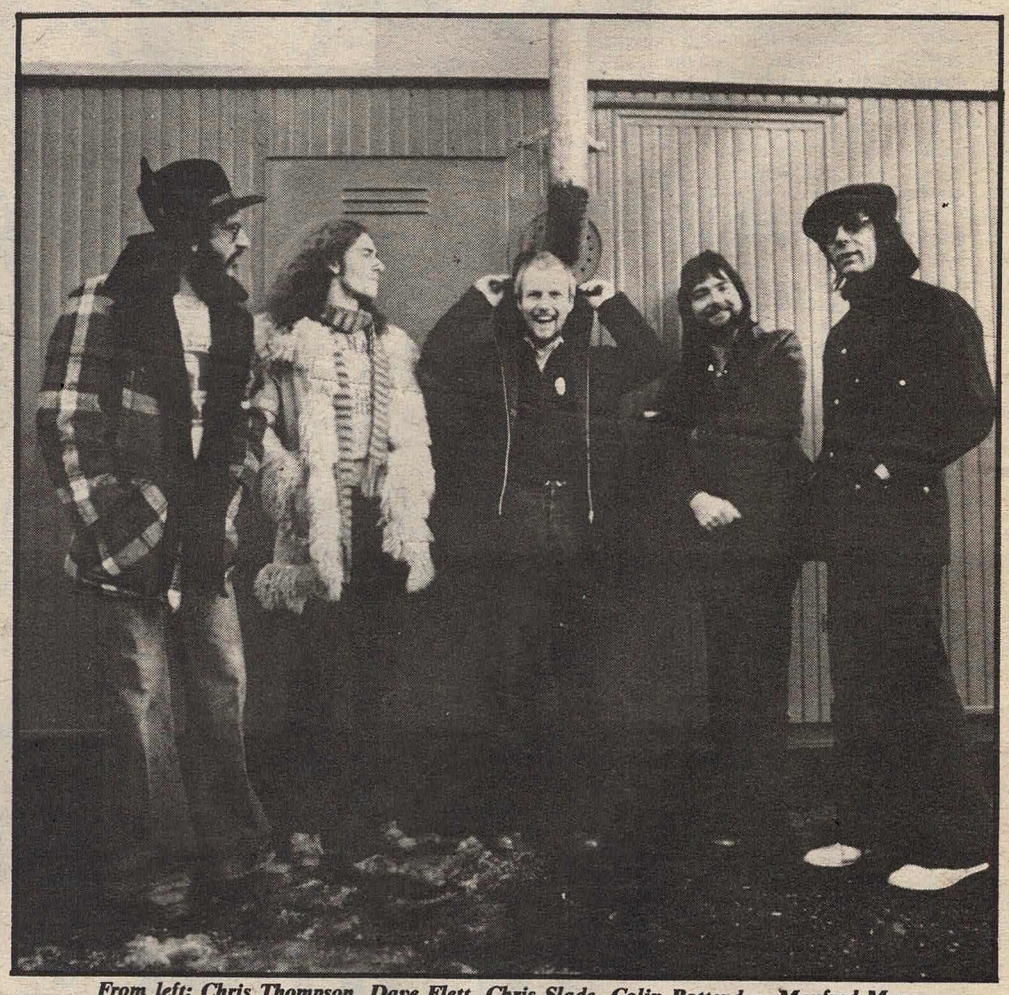
Our next progression is finding the toilet . .



From left: Chris Thompson, Dave Flett, Chris Slade, Colin Pattenden, Manfred Mann.

DECISIONS, decisions. For Manfred Mann, there are always decisions. Backstage at a gig in southern Germany, he announces a dilemma: "How can I go to the toilet?" he asks. "People will see me".

Manfred has just changed into his stage costume. To be precise, he has swapped a blue t-shirt for a red one.

Changing t-shirts hardly transforms Manfred's appearance. Whether in blue or red, still he looks like a bemused beatnik who took a wrong turn on an Aldermaston march.

Manfred, though, obviously sees things a little differently. It's as though Clark Kent has stepped into his phone box, but still wants to remain incognito despite his cod-piece and tights.

Hence, the toilet dilemma.

The architect of the Donauhalle in the town of Ulm has failed to pencil in a can within easy reach of the star dressing room. Indeed, to strain the potatoes one is obliged to cross the stage area in full view of the audience.

No problem, if you're wearing a blue t-shirt, but in a red one, it's a problem.

Manfred finds the answer in his overnight bag. An anorak that appears to be made out of silver foil. Manfred goes glitter? Not quite. The foil is merely the lining, designed to keep out extremes of climate.

He zips himself in, and, collar hunched around him, makes for the door, looking furtive.

You may be wondering why Manfred should wish to encourage debate about his ablutions. It's a little unhip, after all. Hardly the sort of thing you'd expect from Robert Plant or Ritchie Blackmore or Keith Richard. But that's Manfred. A curious mixture of perplexity, authority, and self-mockery.

Manfred describes himself as "a living rock legend". It's another little joke. Perhaps.

Manfred has just enhanced that legend by scoring a number one single in the States with Bruce Springsteen's "Blinded By The Light". And as he once performed the same trick with Dylan's "Mighty Quinn", this latest feat rather encourages the view that Springsteen is the new Dylan . . . .

One the other hand, maybe it just shows that Manfred hasn't lost that ear for a great song that served him so well in the '60s, when he latched up no fewer than 15 hit singles.

Naturally, you'd expect a rock legend with a No. 1 American single to ponder the next step. Weighty debate about tactics and policy would come as no surprise.

But Manfred's decision-making has a range and momentum that goes somewhat further. He tends to agonise aloud over the very minutiae of existence.

"How can I go to the toilet?" he will ask. "People will see me".

When they come to film the Manfred Mann story, the part's a natural for Dustin Hoffman, re-running his Benjamin routine from *The Graduate*. Except that Hoffman doesn't look like Manfred, and Manfred's naivety is only partly genuine. Mainly it's an elaborate put-on, a defence mechanism, designed to confuse and amuse potential detractors.

He also frequently adopts the role of the loser musician, offering astute little sketches of life on the road.

"How about coming out for a night with the boys?" he says, after a gig. "Have a tragic little evening sitting in the corner of the club."

SO HERE we are, on the road with Manfred Mann's Earth Band, who were big in Germany before "Blinded" made them big in the States. A chance to assess the band's long-term potential. Will "Blinded" prove to be no more than a brief reminder of former glories? Or is a major new rock band about to establish itself in the big league?

Whatever, no sooner have we checked in our Ulm hotel that there's a graphic example of Manfred's obsessive commitment to his music. He has a keyboard set up in his room and is instructing his guitarists in the intricacy of an instrumental break he's thought up for a new number. He's been working on the song since before he left London three weeks before, and in his own words, "we've changed it every night".

The idea is that a chunk of be-bop should spring from the middle of the song, in contrast to the rock riff on which the tune hangs. And he's so keen on the idea he's virtually jiving in his seat as he plays.

Upon arrival at the concert hall the band immediately rehearse the song again, by way of a sound check. You wonder whether Manfred is perhaps a perfectionist who's gone over the top.

Chris Thompson (guitar, lead vocals) says: "A person who's had Manfred's amount of success, followed by his amount of failure, followed by success all over agian, just has to be someone special. You may want to go down the shops, he just wants to go over an arrangement again. He's always talking about the music. But working with him is always a laugh."

He's not autocratic, in any way?

"He's not at all bossy.

"He analyses himself in the same way he analyses other people. He recognises his own mistakes. He's always willing to listen."

Manfred explains his approach: "Some very talented bands know exactly what they want and go straight to it. I struggle, sweat, and strain, and move in ever-decreasing circles around my objective until I get there. Frequently I hover around songs like a vulture over a carcass."

We start a formal interview. I've been warned that Manfred is a tough interviewee.

The warnings prove uncannily accurate.

It's as though he becomes a different person when confronted by a journalist's cassette. After 15 years, he's no doubt well aware of the dangers of misrepresenting himself.

The first signs that we're in for a rough time are his avoidance of eye contact and his apparent absorption in the latest issue of a trade paper . . . .

Well, Manfred, congratulations on a No. 1 single in the States. What took you so long?

"It's not the sort of decision one takes. You'll have to ask the American public. I mean, you just work, and one day people buy your record. One wasn't aiming exclusively in that direction.

"We've been concentrating most of our energies on other aspects of our work, tracks that last five or 10 minutes, rather than three minutes. Also, it's a different style of music now. The band's changed slightly since the '60s."

But surely this renewed success indicates a change of tactics?

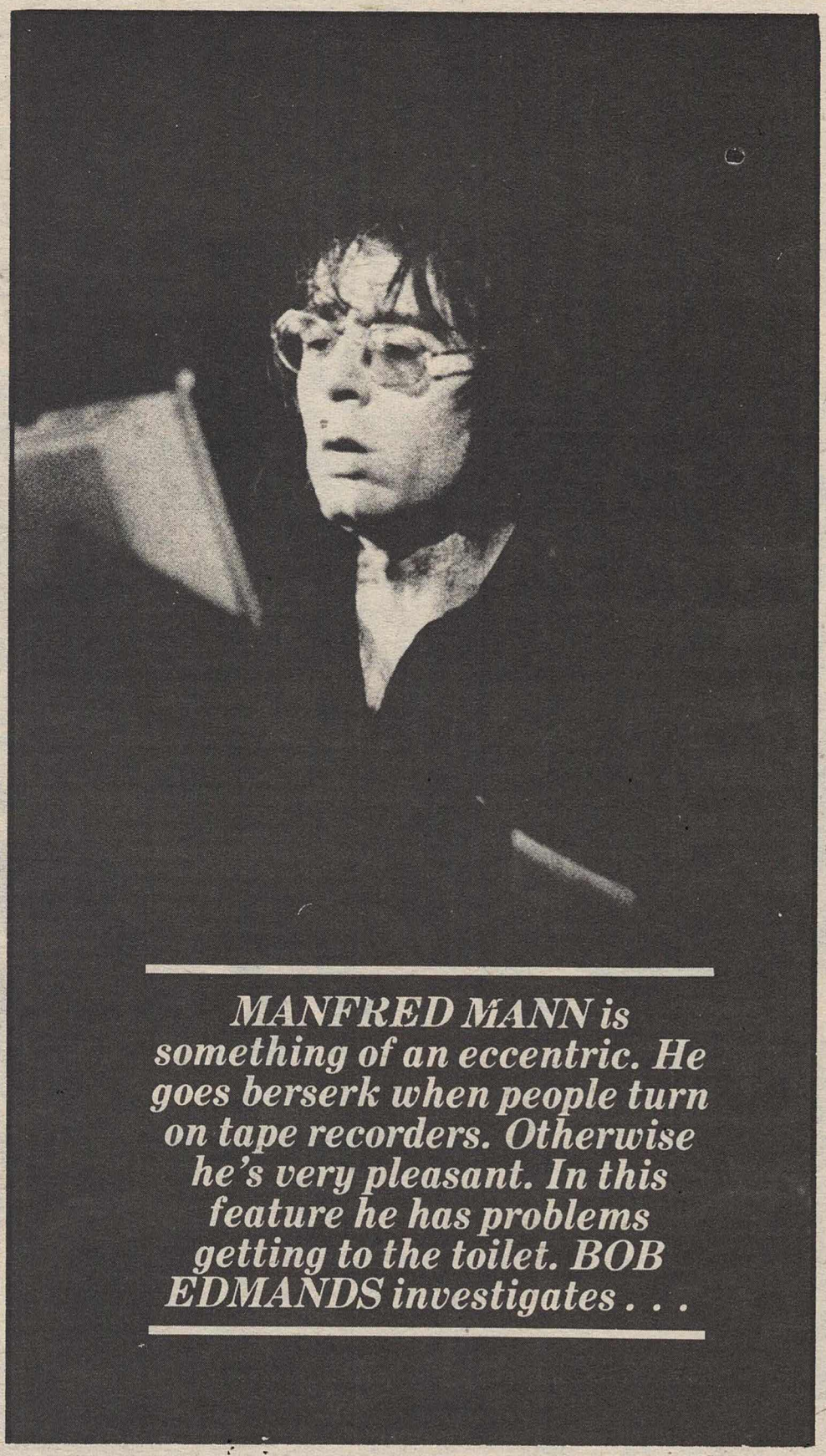
Manfred went through a phase at the end of the '60s when he deliberately moved away from hit singles to concentrate on more ambitious music.

For some reason, discussion of his musical policy seems to anger him.

So I say: "I have a feeling that at one time you had distaste for commercial songs. Have you now lost that distaste?"

Manfred starts shouting: "It's a lovely question. Great. (To the band). You must observe this: 'I have a feeling you once had a distaste'. Starting off with a degree of uncertainty, then assuming that that is the case. Now, I'm meant to answer your assumption as if it was fact. Fuck off".

From being relatively friendly, the interview has degenerated into flat-out abuse. And that's after two questions.



MANFRED MANN is something of an eccentric. He goes berserk when people turn on tape recorders. Otherwise he's very pleasant. In this feature he has problems getting to the toilet. BOB EDMANDS investigates . . .

Manfred continues: "Unfortunately the answer is the same as the answer to your first question. One wasn't aiming that way. That's not to say one had distaste for singles, only the wrong kind of singles. One wanted singles that fitted the band."

The dogged reporter plods on with a question about what sustained Manfred in the years of failure.

"I decided that I enjoyed being on the road more than writing film music and TV commercials — the other alternatives available in the early '70s. The leisured life of a composer in London didn't suit me. There are aspects of travel that I dislike, but on the whole I prefer being on the road to doing anything else."

This answer is less unpleasant, but certainly no more revealing.

He stayed on the road, because he preferred it. Surprise, surprise.

The reporter decides to try to outflank Manfred with a little aggro of his own. Earlier Manfred had spoken disparagingly of the band's "cosmic lyrics". Was he cynical towards what the band offered the public?

"It's merely a healthy ability to laugh at oneself. There's a fine line between being pretentious and being natural. That's the line we walk.

"As for me being cynical, anyone who is in the least bit intelligent is accused of being cynical, unless he goes round with an inane grin on his face 24 hours a day."

In the course of the next question, the reporter attempts to go for the jugular by calling Manfred "a confident intellectual".

Question: "As a confident intellectual, why do you sell yourself short? You put other people's songs on the A-side of your album. You sing very little on the album. You call the band Manfred Mann's Earth Band as an apparent gesture to democracy."

Answer (spoken with intonation of disgust): "First of all, I don't feel I'm a confident intellectual. I'm an intelligent, confident human being, perhaps, but intellectual, not at all. An intellectual is a guy unable to see the essence of a simple issue.

"The quality that marks me out, I think, is that I have very good judgement and that's as high as my ability goes. My judgement tells me that 'Blinded By The Light', written by Bruce Springsteen, is better than 'On The Road To Babylon' or 'This Side Of Paradise', written by us. I think you'd have to agree with that. 'Singing The Dolphin Through', written by Mike Heron, is better than anything on the second side. That's what my judgement tells me."

Okay, so why do you personally do so little singing? (Manfred sings a duet on the last stretch of "Blinded").

"I'm not a good singer. I thought my voice would fit 'Blinded By The Light'. You needn't be a good singer to sing a little bit, but you need to be a good singer to sing all the while. In this case, my voice was a good contrast to Chris Thompson's unpleasant, gruff, big hero voice."

Chris Thompson shouts something abusive across the room.

So why is the band called the Earth Band? Is it a gesture to democracy?

"Well, the word 'band' rhymes rather well with the word 'Mann', we thought."

The interview continues in this fashion for some time, a wearing bout of verbal pugilism.

Curiously, when the cassette is switched off, Manfred reverts to normality. No more paranoia. Instead, there are abundant jokey reflections on the state of the music business, followed by appeals not to quote him.

In many ways, it's sad. When Manfred is talking for public consumption, he's guarded, secretive, unpleasant. When he's talking privately, he's frank, open, and amusing. The mask is uglier than the face.

AS MANFRED'S Band prepare to go on stage, a man with close-cropped grey hair appears to be putting on a pair of combinations. He's Chris Slade the drummer, and it transpires that the outfit is a Kung Fu outfit.

Chris Slade is into martial arts, particularly karate and zen archery. He explains that the point of zen archery is not simply hitting the target, but the way you pull the bow. Which is, of course, true of many things.

Chris is known as "The Guru". He does not smoke, drink, visit clubs, or eat meat. Instead, he does yoga and meditates.

Does he feel better for it? He says he does — but people keep asking him why he looks so ill.

Chris Slade and the bass-player Colin Pattenden have been with Manfred the longest, and both have similiar backgrounds. Chris played drums in Tom Jones' group The Squires, and Colin was with Engelbert Humperdinck's backing band.

Colin recalls that Humperdinck still owes his father £5 for petrol. When Engelbert was still called Gerry Dorsey, Colin's dad took them both to a gig in his car. Not that it matters much now, he says.

The Earth Band take the stage to a massive roar. And it's soon clear that Manfred is no spotlight hog. he has five keyboards, and two are positioned as some sort of screen to hide him from the crowd.

All you can see is that bespectacled, scholarly face peering over the top, like an eccentric professor at a lectern. In fact, he does a quirky little dance behind the Hammond organ, but you can't see that from the crowd.

Equally, the show is not given over to endless keyboard solos. Rather, the set consists of melodic songs, with a rich, attacking, ensemble sound. Manfred takes solos, but no more than Dave Flett, the lead guitarist. Both men favour fast, aggressive flurries of notes which gather momentum from the songs that support them. No one outstays his welcome.

The front man is vocalist Chris Thompson. On vinyl, his voice suggests a mix between Rod Stewart and Elton John. But onstage, the name that suggests itself is Paul Rodgers of Bad Company, though arguably Thompson has more range and volume.

The biggest number is inevitably "Blinded By The Light", but a number of others run it close. Dylan's "Father Of Day, Father Of Night", recorded three years ago, being among the most powerful.

The only song that can possibly top the reception accorded "Blinded" is "Mighty Quinn", a British No. 1 for Manfred in 1968. That's the encore, and the crowd go bananas. These days it's an excuse for the band to power through some instrumental breaks as well, but it's the appeal of the chorus that counts.

THE GIG over, there are no wild scenes of triumph. Colin Pattenden makes everyone a cup of tea, Manfred says he's finally worked out the best possible chord sequence for his new song, and then everyone pelts off down the autobahn for the earthly delights of Munich.

At the Munich Hilton half the party decide they'd rather not go out again as it's 1.30 am, and opt instead for a further pot of tea. The more adventurous spirits venture forth into the night.

The next day's gig is at an equally obscure town — Hof, two miles from the East German border.

The Freiheitshalle is yet another sports hall, capable of holding three to four thousand people. But while Ulm was a full house, Hof is not expected to deliver. Not that anyone's worrying much. Manfred is announcing that once again he's come up with the answer to his problem over that chord sequence for his new song, and Chris Thompson is amusing himself with his dead bears.

Someone at some gig somewhere noticed a choice piece of graffiti on a dressing room wall. "Manfred Mann's Earth Band fuck dead bears", it said.

No one in the band is more amused by this than Chris Thompson. He suggests the next Earth Band tour should be called "Dead Bears Over Europe". It is, he feels, a joke that is built to last.

Manfred is less convinced. But Chris is unabashed.

Chris Thompson joined the band 18 months ago along with guitarist Dave Flett, the two of them replacing one man, Mick Rogers, who both sang and played lead guitar.

He has spent most of his life in New Zealand, coming to Britain three years ago and quickly getting lucrative session jobs singing on TV commercials.

"You only needed one session for American television a month. You get a huge amount for three hours work. So you only need a few sessions to live quite well. I was very lucky."

He still does his ads but the Earth Band is his main concern. Suddenly, he's the voice on an American No. 1. Was that hard to cope with?

"There's not much to cope with, really," he says. "Everyone's so down to earth in this band. There are no heads in the clouds. If anyone gets excited, Manfred keeps them in line.

Dave Flett was driving a laundry van, as well as playing in local bands before he joined. Manfred gave him a month's trial — which just happened to be on an American tour . . . .

AT THE Hof Freiheitshalle, the jury is somewhat muted. No more than two thousand people have turned out, which leaves some floor boards on display. A few punters bop to the set's most commercial tune, and the applause has enough momentum to carry the encore. But the mood is generally a downer.

A dignified dinner follows at Hof's most splendid hostelry, the Hotel Strauss, and the band and road crew trough it into the wee, small hours.

Colin Pattenden enthuses over the wine, entering into careful negotiations with the record company representative over who should pay for which bottles. Colin is a wine buff, and used to bear the brunt of Manfred's mockery on this score.

"Then one day, we noticed the jokes had stopped," says Chris Slade. "And we discovered that Manfred had joined the Wine Club."

During dinner, Manfred is prompted to recall an incident from the '60s, when he was a famous face. He'd had a car crash on the A1. He was slumped over the steering wheel, both collar bones broken, blood pouring from his mouth. A workman ran up to the car, looked inside, saw the casualty, and said "Hey, it's Manfred Mann. Give us your autograph, Manfred."

THE FINAL gig of the tour is Nuremburg. And on arrival Manfred announces that he has finally got the right chord sequence for his new song. The news is greeted with polite indifference.

The band play a driving, energetic set, determined to end the tour triumphantly. By the end of the third song, another by Springsteen, "Spirits In The Night", they're already taking little bows in reponse to the audience's noisy approval.

By the time they get to "Quinn" they're playing so hard that Chris Slade barely notices a firework that's lobbed out of the audience. It hits him on the shoulder, exploding noisily, burning his shirt. He never misses a beat.

For good measure, this is a two-encore show. "We never play a second encore." says Manfred. "We can't follow our first encore." Just so the kids get the message, the lights go up after "Quinn", and a tape plays "Land Of Hope And Glory".

Go home, kids.

But they don't. A good eight minutes of hysteria ensues, and the band return to bash out an ad hoc oldie that creaks a little from disuse.

The champagne in the dressingroom is drunk as though it was earned.

ON THE plane home the next day, Manfred is thinking aloud about decisions. Not quite taking decisions, you understand. Just thinking about them. There is the decision about the next single. The decision about the songs for the next album. The decision about the order of the set for the American tour due to start in three weeks time. There's the decision about the future of the recording studio he's got a stake in.

Of one thing, however, he is certain. He's rejected all earlier possibilities. This is the big one. He's finally and irrevocably got the chords right for this new song.

decisions, decisions. For Manfred Mann, there always decisions.

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STRAIGHTENING OUT THE KINKS

Ray Davies Looks Back

From trad jazz to transvestites . . . A Great British History

Tape machine: PHIL McNEILL **Camera: PENNIE SMITH**

I RECENTLY did three interviews with Ray Davies, a total of about 4 hours — and we still didn't cover everything I wanted to. Does that surprise you? It shouldn't.

In thirteen years, while The Rolling Stones have released 14 albums and The Who just nine, The Kinks have released 17, plus two only available Stateside.

Apart from bland-out merchants like The Hollies, these three are the only stable survivors from the Great British Explosion of 1963/5 — and in every way except in terms of popularity and onstage dynamism, the case is strong for suggesting that The Kinks have always been the most artistically ambitious and imaginative of the three, that they have a greater roster of great songs, and even that they have a healthier future. They are, after all, still a working band.

It is arguable that The Kinks were the first heavy metal band; were the raunchiest '60s R&B band yet cut the first major rock song about homosexuality; were the first satirical rock band yet also one of the most politically compassionate; used Indian effects before any other rock band yet are the most English of all rock bands; wrote the first album length rock opera/musical, and have pioneered the rock musical both onstage and on TV; and have almost never cut an album or a single that marked time artistically.

And to most intents and purposes Ray Davies *is* The Kinks.

Davies himself has written a film score, acted in a straight TV play as well as starring in his own TV musical, and has written an

● *Continued over*

● *From previous page*

album for a TV musical of someone else's scripting that was never produced.

The Kinks also have their own record company, Konk.

Now I'm not a Kinks apologist, and I'm well aware that certain of the ventures I've listed were not wholly successful — but the fact is that many of them were, and as for the rest, well, at least they've had the nerve and the spirit to refuse to rest on their laurels.

Tales abound of Davies' moodiness, and it was typical that after well over a year of trying sporadically to get an interview I should be granted one virtually by accident at 36 hours' notice.

Of our three sessions together, the first was by far the most successful, and that is the one reproduced below. It took place on Friday March 11 in a sunlit reception room at the Konk Studios in Hornsey.

Ray looked like Ray, somewhat to my relief: I hadn't been sure what to expect. He's tall, wears smart casual clothes and that little scarf, hair swept back through his fingers — Norman without his "satin strides and two-tone daisy roots". We drank coffee.

Mr. Davies seemed to have come prepared for the "big job" his publicist had said he wanted to do, because with very little ado he picked up the voluminous sheaf of questions I'd hurriedly cobbled together, and just read from the top. Hence there are few interventions from me to his monologue (and no quotation marks): I was quite happy for him to take the uncontroversial topics of the band's early days at his own pace.

He was surprisingly forthcoming — yet at the end of it all I was really no nearer to knowing him. Strictly a business association.

During our two-hour session we only covered their Pye career, which makes it a convenient point to break this feature. Using Ray's thoughts from our two subsequent conversations alongside my own, the second part of this feature next week will concern itself with assessing The Kinks' career in the '70s on RCA and, now, Arista.

So dust off your kinky boots and your red hunting jacket, and take it from the top, Ray.

I WAS AT ART SCHOOL, THAT'S RIGHT, IN '63, and I was playing in bands just playing guitar. I wasn't singing at all. I was, as they say, getting experience.

At the same time Dave *(Ray's brother)* was still at school, and he had a band with Pete Quaife playing bass. I did a gig with them, it was New Year's Eve 1963, beginning of '64, at Hornsey Town Hall. We were just a fill-in band. I turned up to play, and that was my first real gig with them.

(Other accounts have The Kinks forming both in December '63 and late '62. As their first single, "Long Tall Sally", came out in February '64, it seems likely that Davies is actually referring to a gig on New Year's Eve 1962/3).

I decided to leave art school, though I stayed on for a few more weeks to get the grant. So it was Dave's band to start with.

This was The Ramrods, was it?

They had all different names. The Ravens, Ramrods, right! That was a good name, sounds like it's a punk rock group — The Vibrators, yeah. Ramrods, The Studs, anything, The Bo Weevils, Ravens . . .

We were looking for drummers like nobody's business. Eventually I think we found Mick (Avory) around February, March. He came to an audition upstairs at a pub called the Camden Head, which is still there. He actually cut his hair short to impress us — he didn't realise we were long haired. The bands he'd played in had to look smart. Butlin's bands.

What were you going to do when you were at art college?

I started off at Hornsey. I wanted to paint pictures, and I realised that really was a totality, a total commitment. Art was going in a new direction, and the sort of pictures I wanted to paint weren't part of it. So I went into another facet of art school — I went into theatre. Stage. Three dimensional painting, and lights.

I did that for a couple of terms, and I did a bit of drama with the local drama club.

Apparently a guy called . . . I think he had a record out a little while ago, he came from Croydon . . . Jeff Tull? Jeff . . . McTell! Ralph McTell. I met him in Copenhagen. He said he remembers going to a Croydon Christmas dance, and I was drunk and I got on the stage and pushed the other band off, and started playing a boring harmonica solo. I can't remember that, but apparently I did.

But I did that sort of thing. I was really torn apart. I was four different people: I was at art college, I was playing in a band, I was somebody else who lived in Highgate — I was commuting everyday — and I was playing soccer in the evenings twice a week for Finchley Youth team.

I was interested in all sorts of music. I tried a bit of classical music to start with, and Spanish music, and I was into folk music. But I was more into country music.

Country blues?

Yeah, and R&B of the Leadbelly, Broonzy School. I think the thing that changed my life was a programme called *This Wonderful World*. It was a John Grierson, who invented the documentary — he had a programme on Granada. They showed clips of films from all over the world, and it was on that programme that I first saw Big Bill Broonzy. And it changed my life.

Granada TV seems to have played a big part in your career.

Granada TV? What a cheapo claim! But Broonzy, seeing that . . .

Then I went to play in R&B clubs, and I thought it would be like Broonzy with a drum player and a bass player — and I got there and it was Chuck Berry and Ray Charles.

The band I was playing in was old tradders. They used to be a trad band, and the horn players had stayed and they'd got a coloured singer, and they were playing R&B.

That's a little like the very early background of The Stones.

Yeah. The Stones were playing in the same club. Our band, we did the main set and The Stones did the fill-in set.

I REMEMBER the first time I saw The Stones. The band leader said, "Come on, let's go over the pub." It was in Picadilly, Archer Street, the pub. I said, "No, I wanna stay and see the other band," 'cause they all looked about the same age as me — I was the baby of this group. He said, "Don't watch 'em. They're a skiffle group."

And I sat down and I saw them play, and I saw energy. I saw Brian Jones — a total star. I saw Keith, I saw Charlie, saw Jagger — not so prominent then. They stood in a line, the three of 'em, all in their round button collars and their little shirts.

The sound was exciting. Couldn't hear the vocal, but that was great — he was just there, a really trebly, bad PA . . . I think that was the best I've ever seen 'em play. Really.

People used to come and sit in, and I remember one day we were playing in Richmond, and Davy Graham actually borrowed my guitar for his set. He was someone I really admired.

So it was a mixture of that as well, and all the other bands that were around. Georgie Fame and The Blue Flames, I think, were the ultimate R&B band in London at that time. There were some fine bands, with energy. That's the most important thing in any kind of music. Belief.

So I was still at art school. The band I was with, we had good nights and bad nights — and one night there were literally no people there, so we had to take turns to go in the audience and clap. But one of my fondest memories of that time was my turn to be the audience. The piano player — I don't know his name — he was an old timer — played a song called "Honky Tonk Train Blues", just him and the drummer. Nobody in the club . . . and he was magic.

I've got good memories from that. Going to rehearsals in Notting Hill Gate, y'know, basements . . . and carrying an amp and a guitar . . .

I still wasn't singing very much.

What, even in Dave's band?

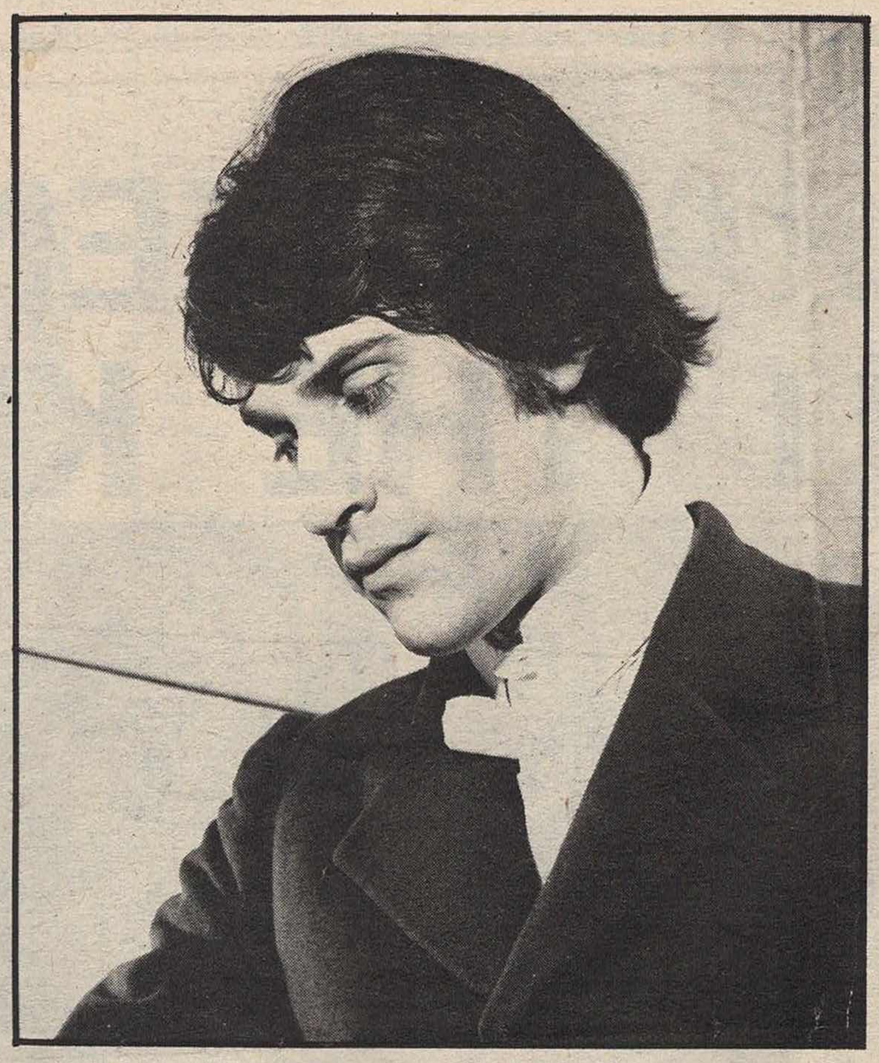
Yeah. We were really an instrumental based group. I was really into The Ventures. Dave and I used to get together and play tapes at my nephew Terry's — Dave used to buy Duane Eddy records — and I remember saying it'd be great one day, Dave, if we could have a group like The Ventures with vocals on top.

Groups like The Shadows were always into big echo machines, but The Ventures were sort of dry, and they had that chunky guitar: really ahead of its time.

We used to share vocals. Pete would do some — I did a third of the vocals, and there was no harmonies at all. And I really wasn't into writing at all.

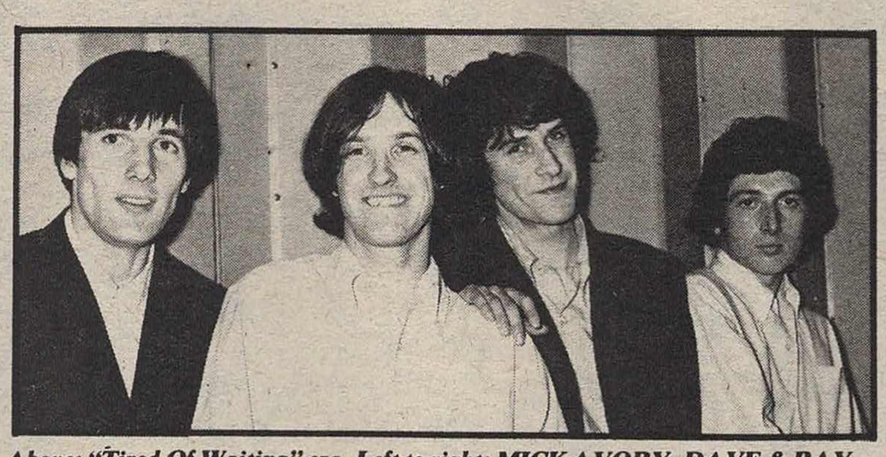
When were you signed?

I think it was around January, February. We made our first record, got signed on our first tour, and signed with our agency and record company all at once.



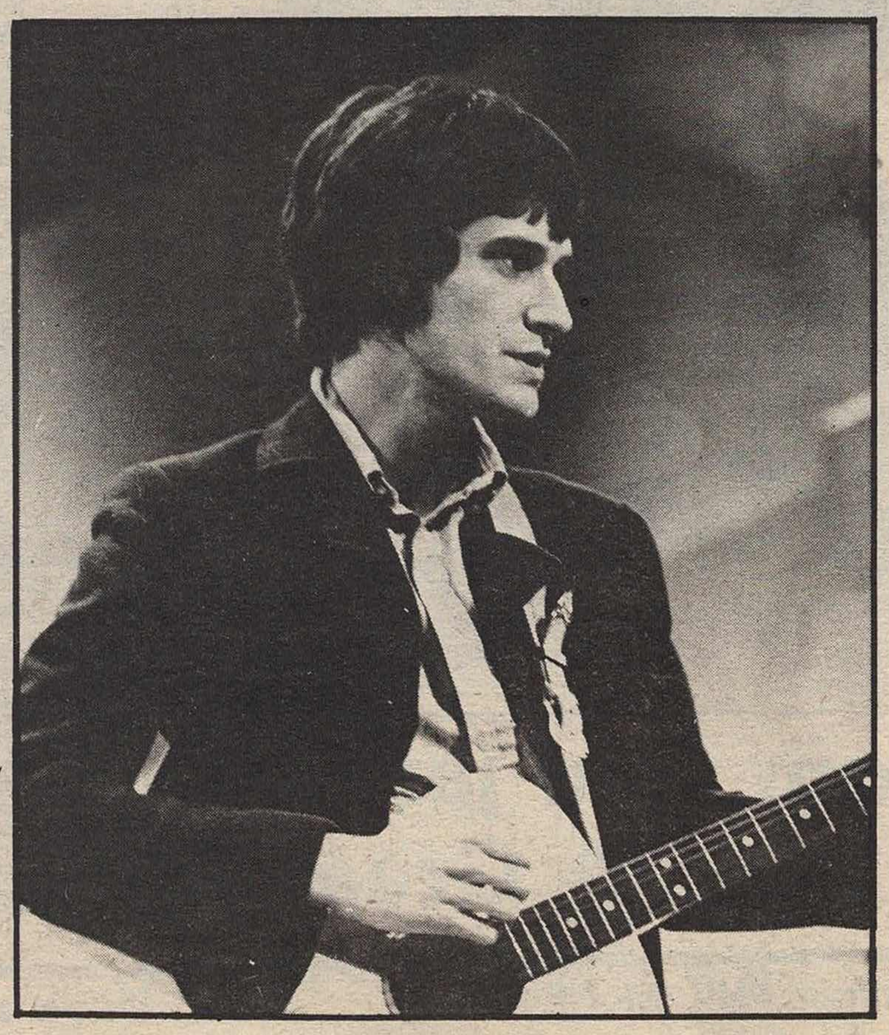
FLASH RAY:

The Memoirs Of A Gentleman Neurotic



Above: "Tired Of Waiting" era. Left to right: MICK AVORY, DAVE & RAY, PETE QUAIFE.

'I remember the first time I saw The Stones. Our band leader said: 'Don't watch them — they're a skiffle group.'"



WE WERE ON A FIVE-WEEK TOUR with The Dave Clark Five and The Hollies, opening the show — and we did four numbers. One of the things we did on the show was "You Really Got Me". It started off as one of those almost Ventures backing tracks, and I stuck a line on top.

Do you remember writing it?

Yeah. I wrote it for somebody else, because I still wasn't sure what I was going to do in this group — I've never had Dave's drive as a guitar player — and then I realised after the first tour I could sum up the group sound. I could write a song which contained the group sound.

We signed to a publisher, management and things — we had three managers, who all went in different direction — and they'd given us songs of theirs, the publishing guys. But we didn't want to do them, so I started writing.

They wanted us to write some Beatle type material. I remember doing four or five demos in Regent Sound in Denmark Street, and they said, "Yeah, the first three, they're what's happening. We don't want to hear the last one."

The last one was "You Really Got Me".

On that first tour they asked us to take it out, because we had to do cover jobs, things the audience knew. We were just there to test out the sound really.

They sent the road manager, Alan Carter, to get us together, because we were really untidy and had no stage act, and he said you've got to do numbers everyone knows. And he was putting through a rehearsal, and it was Graham Nash — he was in The Hollies — Graham said, "Don't make them play what other people do. Let them play what they play."

So we kept it in.

Then we went on one-nighters all over the country, topping the bill in clubs. We worked a lot round Manchester — people actually thought we came from Manchester — and then we did some sessions and decided to record "You Really Got Me".

We had to get permission from the record company to record it! They said, "You're going to go in the studio and they're going to let you do 'You Really Got Me'. You're happy now, are you?"

We went with Shel Talmy and, with respect to Shel, it sounded like Phil Spector. It wasn't us at all. I remember we did a gig at some ballroom in Margate, and we played "You Really Got Me" and the audience clapped at the end of the song — and they didn't do that after anything else. It represented us. It was our song — and Shel made it sound like . .

What, you weren't happy with the single?

I wasn't happy with the production. And they said, "Well it's going out, like it or not." I said, "If you put this single out I'm never going to pick up a guitar again. I'll just give up, because I'll probably never write another song like it."

It wasn't all Shel's fault about the production. He wasn't as close to it as we were. In the end, fortunately, through the publisher withdrawing the copyright, they said, "Right, you're going to have the chance to re-record it the way you want it."

So we booked a little studio, Studio IBC in Portland Place. I said to Shel, "I don't want any echo on this record." We had three hours to do it, and the publisher phoned up and said, "Right, it's costing us money — you'd better make a better record or else!"

Did you have Nicky Hopkins?

No, we used Arthur Greenslade. He used to do orchestrations — and I was knocked out because he was more famous than any of us! I was on rhythm — I had a Maton, an Australian copy of a Gibson.

Dave got this fuzz sound by having a Vox AC30 and little green pre-amp,

about five watts power, and he'd poked it with knitting needles to make holes in the speaker, so it farted. It was great, better than any fuzz sound. We, y'know, obviously don't do that any more — but that's how he got that sound.

And what about Jimmy Page?

No. This is ridiculous. He wasn't even around.

He wasn't on the record?

Absolutely not. But there is another Telecaster on it. I wanted two Telecasters, because I wanted us to do it with no dubbing — and his name was Bob. He worked for the publisher. He played rhythm too.

WHEN I LEFT that studio I felt great. It may sound conceited, but I knew it was a great record. When it came out it was reviewed in the *Melody Maker* by a guy called Dave Berry, who'd had a few hits — so he mattered. He said "This group sounds like they actually recorded what they wanted," which said it all for me.

At the time it was the best record ever made.

Oh, it was. So then it changed. It changed us because all of a sudden we didn't have to carry our own guitars, we didn't have to carry our own clothes — we had people to do it.

And that's when you started wearing the hunting jackets?

No, we had the hunting jackets at the end of the Dave Clark tour. But we were the real poor relatives of that tour, no real road manager to carry our stuff. We were scruffs, y'know, out and out scruffs.

I went into Selmer's and bought a Telecaster for about ninety odd pounds, and I've still got it. Dave uses it as a standby. And James Burton's played that guitar, on our first American tour when we did *Shindig*.

In fact, on "Till The End Of The Day" — which was an extension of "You Really Got Me" — I said to Dave, "Put that sort of James Burton feel on the solo." It's a slightly cleaner sound than on the other ones.

The "You Really Got Me" solo was based on the G-string. The whole solo is just dat dat dat dat, chewing that string the whole time.

That seemed very influenced by the break in "Louie Louie".

Dat dat dat be doodle doodle doodle — it's fast against a ponderous rhythm, yeah, it could be. Dom dom be deh deh deh — no, I think that other one's a bit planned. More musical.

Dave's was out and out . . . he had to do it. It wasn't exactly a broken hands job, but the heavies would have been upon us if we'd failed. And when the solo came I just shouted at him. I think he did it out of fear more than anything.

Dave's solo had nothing to do with music.

"Tired Of Waiting" seemed like a big departure.

I told everyone I had lots of songs ready to record for our first album, but I only had six. So I wrote "Tired Of Waiting" on the train going to the session. When we'd got the back track down they said, "We'll have a break now, then we'll do the vocals." Of course, I hadn't worked them out, and I literally wrote the song on the train and the words in the coffee shop. They were very simple.

We hadn't made "All Day And All Night" yet, right? "You Really Got Me" was going up the charts, so I thought "Tired Of Waiting" would have been the follow-up. But Shel said, "It's good, but we should leave it. It's too smooth". He was very smart.

(Ray proceeds to detail the writing of "Tired Of Waiting", with plenty of relative minors and major thirds flying about).

You understood relative minors at the time?

On the guitar I'm a minor freak. All the things I wrote on the guitars are in minors. I wrote better for The Kinks on the piano. At the time my piano playing *was* The Kinks sound: I played dominant chunky chords with my left, in octaves, and dit dit dit with the right — which was our sound.

The follow-up to "Tired Of Waiting" was "Everybody's Gonna Be Happy."

Yes. It was a turkey. I thought it was a great record. You know why? Because the drumming was good.

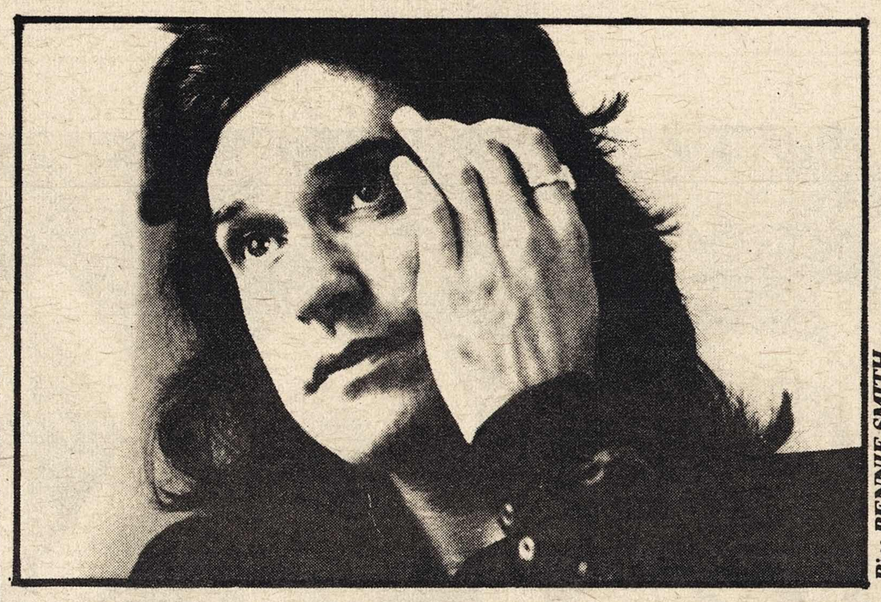
We'd just been on tour, and suddenly from opening the show we were topping the bill. There was a girl singer called Kim Weston — she had a Tamla Motown back-up band *(Weston was on Motown)*, and they brought over this coloured drummer called Uriel, who used to play bap bap really off-the-wall stuff.

And Mick and I used to stand at the side of the stage and think he was great. It was influenced by that band, that single: we just wanted to prove that we could play like that . . . floating.

So it was really an exercise, an experiment. That was the first experiment using the public as guinea pig. That's one luxury of being a successful band, you can experiment in public sometimes. I don't do that so much now.

When would you say you had done that?

When? Right up until just over a yar ago. "Preservation" was an experiment; "Soap Opera" was less. "Everybody's Gonna Be Happy" was a good experiment.

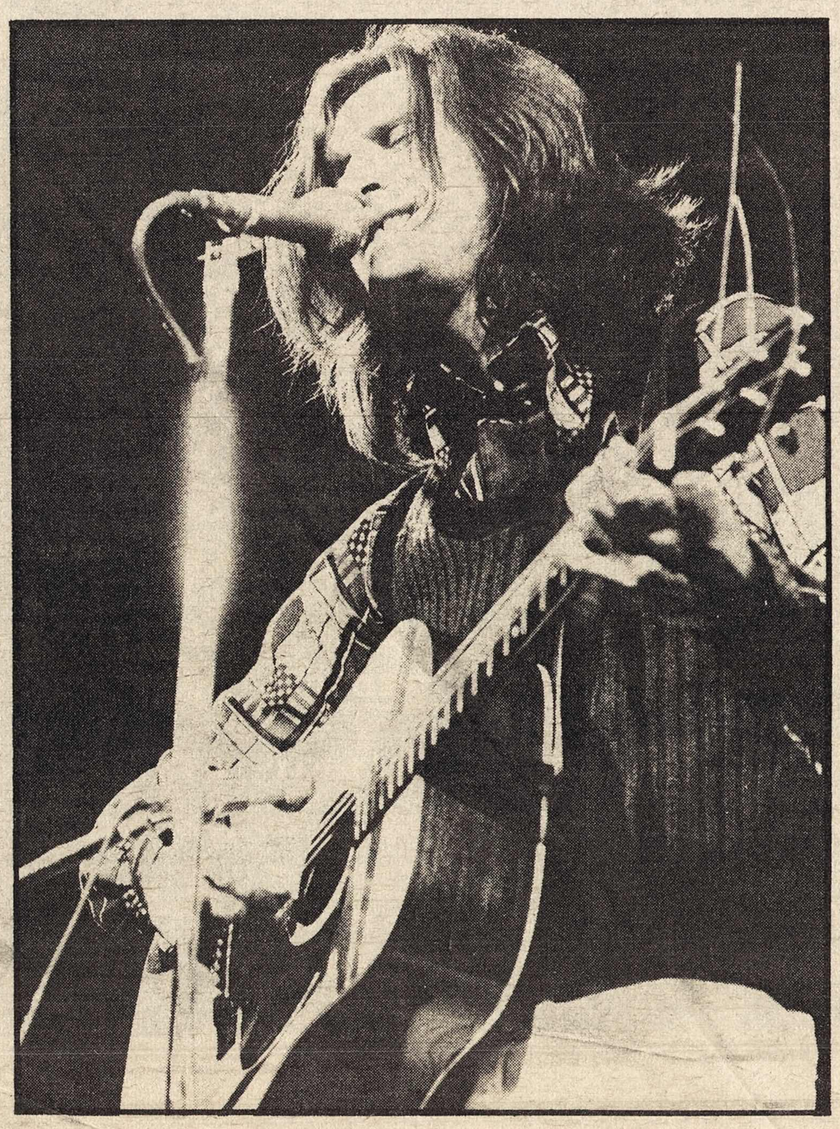


Pic: PENNIE SMITH

"I cracked up. The Kinks actually went to Belgium without me — Dave did all the vocals."

Below: chartbound with "You Really Got me"

1964: "You Really Got Me", "All Day And All Night".
1965: "Tired Of Waiting", "Everybody's Gonna Be Happy" "See My Friends", "Kwyet Kinks" EP, "Till The End Of The Day".
1966: "Dedicated Follower Of Fashion", "Sunny Afternoon", "Dead End Street".
1967: "Waterloo Sunset", "Autumn Almanac".
1968: "Village Green Preservation Society" LP.
1969: "Arthur" LP.
1970: "Lola", The Long Distance Piano Player.
1971: "Percy" LP, and move from Pye to RCA.



"SEE MY FRIENDS" WAS A PRETTY ASTONISHING ONE. *It was a year before, for instance, "Paint It Black", and it had that sort of Indian drone effect.*

The reason I think "See My Friends" is better as an effect — "Paint It Black" is more exciting — is we're not using sitars. We're using a Framus twelve-string, and I'm sitting close to my amp, and because it's an acoustic I'm getting feedback all the time. So I'm getting an oscillating note above it; it was like an organ sound at the top. Shel shoved the whole thing through a compressor, a limiter, and then I stuck a silly vocal on top.

It was reputed to be a homosexual song.

Yeah, it probably was. Nobody's perfect. It's "she's gone," so it's a girl . . . so it was probably a bisexual: got nobody else, so I might as well go with my other friends.

At the time of "See My Friends" the gay thing was something that was written about in The Sunday People as groups of men in white polo necks on Hampstead Heath . . .

Gay people were even talked about in art school as being groups of men in white polo necks. It wasn't even talked about at all in the real world. Vassal was a man you didn't even talk about.

(Vassal was a civil servant who was involved in an early '60s blackmail/spy scandal).

Back then when I heard those rumours I was probably pretty shocked.

Yeah, so was I. Because I couldn't see anything wrong with it.

Then you did "Kwyet Kinks". It seems in retrospect like it was a turning point.

After "Everybody's Gonna Be Happy" we went to America, which was frightening. We were playing in Philadelphia with The Supremes to open for us in this convention hall — we were really big. Philadelphia and the Hollywood Bowl . . . The Beach Boys, Sonny and Cher, The Righteous Brothers, all those people were on before us — it was totally unreal. I think it was a situation like they topped San Francisco, we all had a turn . . .

At the end of that tour we had a tremendous legal problem, because our three managers by this time were *really* going three different directions . . . and we were suffering.

I came back from that tour and I went ~~for~~ four days' holiday in Torquay — Torquay or Exeter — in a really posh hotel. I wrote "Well Respected Man" there. That whole EP was a demonstration of what I felt.

But I was shrewd, because I didn't make it a bitter song; I tried to make it humorous. I wrote two or three other songs at the time which were totally hate orientated, and I've never recorded them.

Do you have someone editing your songs, anyone who's there to say, "Think about that one"?

No. I don't. A few years ago I would have liked that. I tend to do that to people without them knowing; sometimes I test out songs on people and I don't even sing it. I throw lines at them: "Oh, I'm really tired of waiting for you. It's your life, you can do what you want."

I know I can detach myself.

Most people would question that with reference to "Preservation".

Yes, all right. But I can detach myself. And I still believe in "Preservation".

Do you think your subsequent career would have been different if "Well Respected Man" hadn't taken off?

That was the first lyric based thing. I think it detracted from our career. I'll tell you why: because it made us go off in other directions.

And you regret that?

No, I don't. But I think the band might have suffered — because at this time there was nobody to touch us. We were unique, like The Beatles were unique, right?

I'm not being bigheaded — The Kinks were unique. I remember Jeff Beck and Page and Eric (Eric toured with us when he was in The Yardbirds) and Giorgio Gomelsky, who used to manage them, saying that we'd done something they were all trying to get together but couldn't.

It's like getting to the North Pole first. Really, until we started diversifying we couldn't be touched. We were a better group afterwards, but we became touchable.

But I didn't suffer. As a writer I found it gave me confidence to try other things.

I assume that "Kwyet Kinks" was an EP because it's easier to experiment on an EP.

No, I think it was a cop-out because they couldn't sort a single out — and it sold phenomenally. It went gold in England, and they took it off as a single in America and it was Top Ten. It's a very simple song. It still had those chunky chord patterns, so I hadn't started breaking it up yet. I was still blocking it out.

"SUNNY AFTERNOON" . . . I HAD TO COME OFF THE ROAD. I was ill, I cracked up considerably.

The Kinks actually went to Belgium — not many people know this — The Kinks were committed to go on a tour of Belgium, about ten dates, and they took somebody else to replace me. They played the gigs and Dave did all the vocals.

I was a zombie. I'd been on the go all the time from when we first made it till then, and I was completely out of my mind. I went to sleep and I woke up a week later with a beard. I don't know what happened to me.

(This seems to have taken place in Spring '66, eighteen months after "You Really Got Me").

I'd run into the West End with my money stuffed in my socks, I'd tried to punch my press agent, I was chased down Denmark Street by the police, hustled into a taxi by a psychiatrist, and driven off somewhere.

And I didn't know. I woke up and I said, "What's happening? When do we leave for Belgium?" And they said *(soothing whisper):* "Ray, it's all right. You've had a collapse. Don't worry, you'll get better."

And I just sat in a room in darkness at the middle of the day, and I would eat salads and go to bed early. The first music I heard was a Frank Sinatra album. I couldn't listen to anything to do with rock'n'roll, it made me go funny.

And then "Sunny Afternoon". I got away from breaking chords up and started doing scales. All the songs I wrote at that time had the scale influence. A silly little song called "End Of The Season" . . .

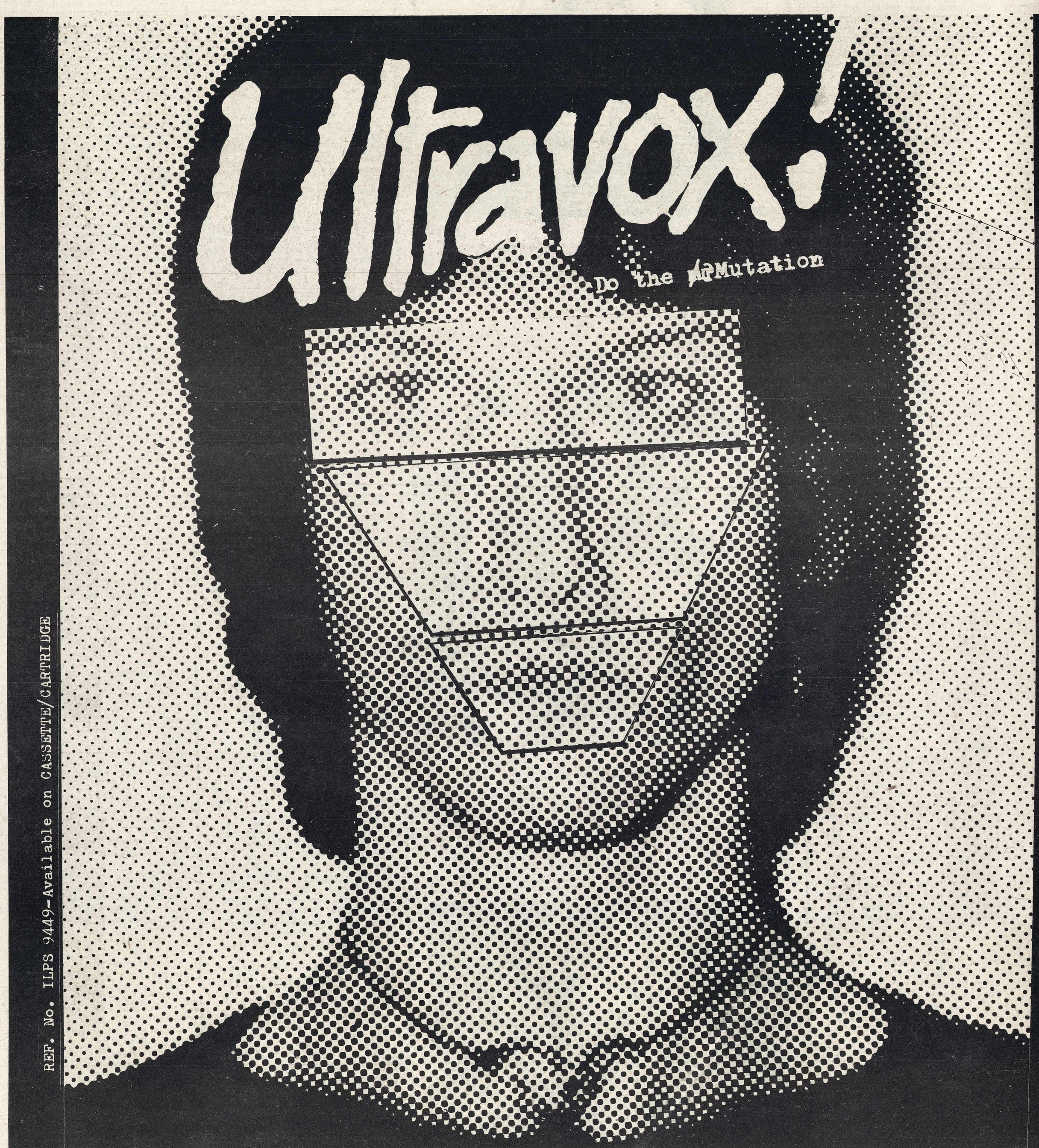
"End Of The Season" was a nice song. *(Sings)* "Since you've been gone, end of the season." It's about a cricket player. The cricket season's over, his girlfriend's gone to Greece, and he's going to take up rugby. "Down in the scrum on a wet afternoon." I really must have gone crazy!

I said, "I'll come back and I'll keep going until I've made another Number One" — because when you're used to No. 1s, a No. 3 doesn't matter. And then "Sunny Afternoon" got there and I said, "That's it. I've done it now — I can stop."

And then the manager said, "Let's try and get back in America." That was the next spur for me to go on after "Sunny Afternoon": you see, because of all the trouble we'd had in the States there was a ban imposed on us from the M.U. there. It was nothing to do with us. There were contractual problems between our then management and the agency, and they said until it's resolved they can't tour.

(The resume of The Kinks' career in the Hardy-Laing Encyclopedia Of Rock *says they were banned by the American Federation Of Musicians from 1965-9 for "unprofessional conduct" after a "disastrous" 1965 US tour. The only reason I've tracked down was that they played TV there without an exchange TV visa — an offence hardly warranting a four-year ban. Presumably, from what Ray says, the management persuaded him not to retire in late '66 by promising some-*

● *Continued on page 28*



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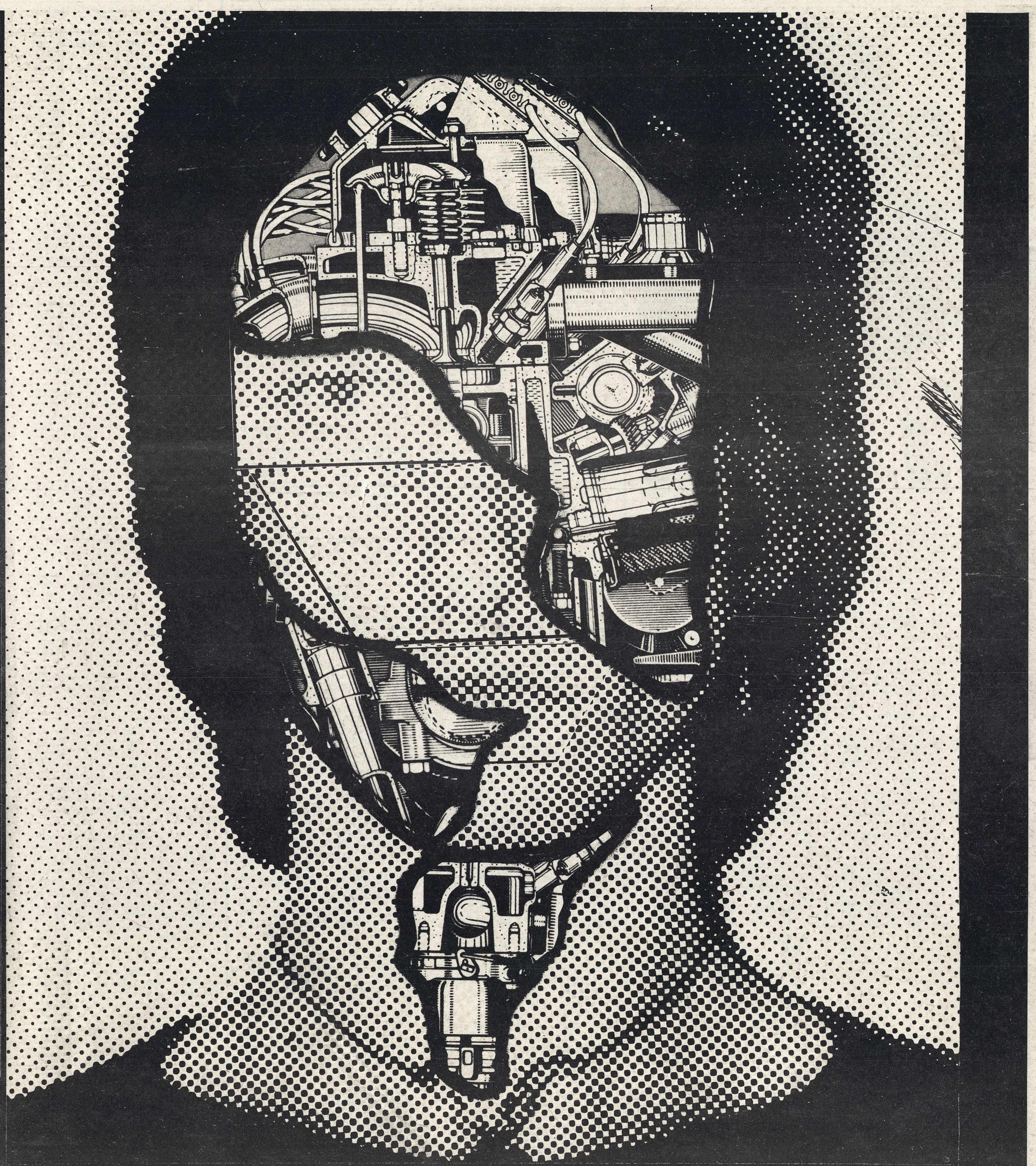

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Brother DAVE

More Kinks tales

● From page 25

thing they didn't manage to achieve for another three years).

So we hadn't been to America, and we had gone through all these different changes of style. When we first went to the States we were "You Really Got Me", and we went through so many different things — "Well Respected Man", "Sunny Afternoon", "See My Friends" — that the Americans were finding it hard to relate to us.

But we couldn't tour there until '69 — and in between we'd made "Waterloo Sunset". "Waterloo Sunset" was one of the happiest times of my life. I had my friends; I used to play football on a Sunday; life was music and writing and touring with the band . . . but we couldn't tour in the States. It hit me really hard. "Waterloo Sunset" was a hit everywhere except America.

YOUR STRANGE relationship to the aristocracy . . .

When I first joined The Kinks, remember, we weren't a vocal band, and we were asked to be a back-up group — shall I say it? — to a singer called Robert . . .

Oh, Robert Wace.

You said it, I didn't — so I'm innocent! We did a few debutante type balls and we backed him for a while . . . until we started doing youth clubs as well. He didn't quite hit it off with youth clubs. He actually got booed off one night, and he said, "You'd better do it. You sing, all right?" So I did it, and he was phased out and became one of our managers.

So these debutante gigs, were they your only brush with that sort of world?

We played anywhere. We were as much in touch with them as we were youth clubs, Meccas. To get a booking from Mecca, that was a big thing — I think it was more prestigious than Butlin's!

Yeah, we did a lot of those debutante parties. But there was no conscious effort to get in with all that; it was just that they liked us, because our music was rough and we didn't care. Remember at the time, '63, '64, Barstow, Sillitoe, y'know — that was really fashionable.

It was a kind of classless thing. I think The Beatles too, all that time, it was classless and it could appeal to everybody.

I was under the impression that you and The Stones were close to it yet could still relate to street kids as well.

Absolutely. The Stones, yeah. Also the French thing around '65, '66, going to France and the clubs . . . The Stones have stayed in that thing, and we went somewhere else.

Oldham was a big influence, but he was arrogant. Brian was as well. But that arrogance is associated with that social scene, or whatever you want to call it.

Presumably it had a big influence on your writing.

"Sunny Afternoon" was about a man who made it. The stately home thing, I never wrote it for that. It wasn't a factual thing, it was the idea, the picture. Maybe that was a bad thing, because I was getting away from making statements that were natural to me. I started to have characters. I had to invent a character to sing it: *my* house, *my* boat, *my* stately home, save *me* . . .

(At this point the interview hits a major snag, from which it never fully recovers: Ray, who evidently allows himself this sort of reminiscence session but rarely, asks me if I can let him have a transcription of the whole two-hour conversation, not for any censorship purposes, but simply as a memory jogger. Tape transcription is a helluva long job and, the NME not being staffed with a surplus of secretaries, it's down to individual writers. As it entails a full weekend's work, I have to think about it before agreeing — the transcript should, in fact, be with Ray any day now — and my hesitation upsets the tensely cooperative and cautiously friendly ambience. Ray remains as affable as before, and it is only on playing the tape that I realise just how tangential several of his ramblings become, and that at one point he spends ten minutes answering questions I don't ask and ignoring the ones I do. Most of the rambling's edited out).

(Ray selects another topic).

MODS. NEVER AWARE OF MODS AND ROCKERS. I never thought about it. We had our own character.

The Who were really aware of it. After our first world tour, we came back on a tidal wave of euphoria, and I was going up to a gig and I heard on the radio bap badap bap badap — "Can't Explain". And when I heard Shel had produced it I thought, right, y'know? I didn't realise it was The High Numbers.

Were you annoyed about it?

Well, I thought, Shel, it sounds like us. And it did. But they've gone on . . .

They have stayed reasonably close to you, actually.

Close but a long way apart. I love them. I can hear in their music when they are having a hard time. I didn't like "Matchbox", or "Squeezebox" — I felt that the drums were mixed too loud. But it served its purpose: they got the airplay, and they did their concert, and they were the old Who again. I spoke to Townshend after the gig; and I said, "What was the gig like?" and he said, "All right, but the audience was shitty."

But it was pouring with rain all day.

He was a bit distressed by it.

Did you use to do pills?

Pills? I take pills all the time. I'll show you my briefcase — I'm a doctor. Aspirin, anything, I take it.

I'm good at not sleeping. I like working long hours in the studio; I like to get right into a song and disappear in the chords, and then I get very very . . . I come up with lots of ideas, I think by physical trickery rather than mental trickery . . .

The way one person comes into a room, and it changes everybody's personalities because it's a different combination, whether they like it or not — I find it most interesting.

I'm a deep thinker, but I go off at tangents — like we are now. I'm a deep thinker in my own world.

Presumably this is some kind of explanation for why when everyone else started taking acid . . .

Oh, that was all at art college. That was '63. I was into drinking then.

. . . The Kinks went off into a completely . . .

Went off into a fantasy world.

. . . completely different little side alley of their own. You seemed to be totally detached from "progressive" music, acid rock and so on.

(Ray, for some reason, answers this by talking about the "front row" type intensity of his involvement, apparently in reply to a question about whether it's possible for the live performer to get perspective on his own work, and goes on to a discussion of studio technique. He says he intimidates the others in the studio. When I pose what seems an appropriate question to follow that, Ray leaps off at another bizarre tangent, as follows . . .)

Do you find that studio alienation between you and the other musicians comes from that state of mind you were describing when you've been working in the studio for a long time?

Yeah. But I find I say to myself that I've got to write songs that other people understand. So I'll go on a train or a tube in the rush hour and I'll walk around Leicester Square with 50p in my pocket, and get back . . .

This is what you do now?

No, but I have done. And the songs are total fantasy. I think the only way I can relate to people is by locking myself in a room.

In the end people are just people. Maybe it's a very bad attitude, but I think people are the same everywhere — because we're animals. People are bigger than they were 100 years ago, but they're still the same. The same little ambitions.

You can get the most sophisticated man in the world, and if he's hung-up about his feet nothing will change it. He'll go to university, he'll become a nuclear scientist, he'll fly to the moon, land on the moon — and the moon-man will say, "Hey, you've got big feet!"

And he'll be back at school because that's what they said to him at school. I don't think people change that much.

(I ask Ray about Pete Quaife, Kinks' bassist who quit in '69).

Pete Quaife was the true amateur. He's not a great music lover, but Pete did it because he enjoyed life. And he was my friend. The saddest thing was that we were very successful, and we toured, and we didn't talk to one another and we weren't friends. The day we stopped communicating offstage was a good time to stop.

HE WENT A BIT crazy. He had an unfortunate car accident, the poor guy. It was a gig up in Blackpool. We left in the car, and he came down with the equipment after us, and the equipment ran into the back of an articulated lorry and smashed up completely.

Pete broke his ankle, but he was so frightened he got out and ran across the road into the middle of the motorway with a broken ankle. And then his world caught up with him, because he had to stay in bed for a while — like mine caught up with me on "Sunday Afternoon".

Then he decided to leave.

Then he came back.

Then we were supposed to be doing a gig in Ireland. We got in the plane, we landed, we got in the car — and somebody was missing. Pete hadn't got on the plane. He had stood at the bottom of the runway, and he couldn't do it.

He's living in Denmark, and I think he's in commercial art, which is where he started.

Why did Shel Talmy stop producing?

Because when you are musicians starting up you think you can do everything, and I wanted to produce my own things.

Actually it was "Waterloo Sunset". I did it with drums, bass and acoustic, and I dubbed Dave's guitar on afterwards, then the vocals, and a big piano at the end — it's a pretty bare track, actually. That's really when I first got into production; I did most of it after that.

I think a lot of people would question it, because they think Talmy was the guy that was keeping you on the rails, if you like, not letting you indulge yourselves.

No, I don't think it was. In my opinion Shel is not a producer, he is a man who is good at atmosphere. But I agree that producers are important: someone to be answerable to other than yourselves. And we had that, that somebody else. We tried things out on people.

When we made "Village Green Preservation Society" everybody, even people around us, said, "This is good. This is a departure." But it was not heavy, and everything was heavy at the time. So it just got lost.

Was it very galling to be in this age of so-called experimentation, and to do your big experiment and have it ignored?

Yeah, because at that time it was three-piece bands. Rhythm guitarists died out a bit, took a back seat — and it was Jimi and it was Cream . . .

But it was also "She's Leaving Home", convoluted masterworks, etc, etc.

No, I don't think you can judge the rest of the music world at that time with The Beatles, because that time, regardless of The Beatles, was America's answer. America came back. Bill Graham and the Fillmore, as well as three-piece bands like Cream.

The Beatles were lucky: they never had to go on the road. It wasn't "She's Leaving Home". The emphasis was placed firmly on the West Coast. When I finally got to go back to America it was a different world.

During that '68, '69 period, were you worried?

Maybe in a way I was being shrewd, because I really got into songwriting. I said maybe now is the time to try something for myself — we'd gone as far as we could go with what we were doing, and I wanted to go somewhere else.

Were you worried about losing your audience?

Not really. You're always losing your audience; you're getting a new audience.

But it seemed you were alienating people, if anything, by playing on Olde Englishness with "Arthur" at a time when everything . . .

Yeah, but I was playing on what was in England. I was aware that England had had it as the rock capital of the world — it was somewhere else, and I couldn't get there. If you want to write on that level, you can only live it and write it, or be around it.

I couldn't experience it by reading the America column in the *NME*. If I lost direction at all, maybe that's the reason — because I had to go through that experimental period.

(This is a little strange, because although The Kinks were banned from working in the States, they were free to visit).

You seem to be hinting that your obsession with Victoriana . . .

It wasn't an obsession at all. Absolutely not. Granada Television took me out to lunch and said, "We want you to write an opera." I said I would write a musical.

They said, "We want it to be The Decline And Fall Of The British Empire." I said I can't do it, but I'll write an album about somebody who lives in a place where everything is crumbling around him, if you do the script.

I wrote the album. We got a pre-production TV, we got the director and the sets. It was only at the last minute that there were production arguments — and it got shafted.

But our career hinged on that. I spent a year on that — a year and a half nearly — and it fell through. It was really hard.

Just after that all of a sudden we got our visas to go to the States. We weren't prepared — and they hadn't seen us since "You Really Got Me" — and it was like a complete gap, which happily has now been made up.

Because that was a monster, our first record. I can't improve upon it. Wherever they play it, whenever thay do an interview with me on the radio, it's butchered stereo. It's not the stereo version I play; it's a mono record.

HOW DID YOU COME TO WRITE "LOLA"?

I had a couple of months when I had to do something else, when I wasn't thinking of music, and it was the first song I wrote after the break. The only thing I had to think about was the beginning, getting the thing to sell in the first five seconds. The rest came naturally. Or unnaturally.

Were you saying earlier that it relates to an actual incident?

Yeah. Take two incidents six months apart, put them together, and it's true. It happened very early on, actually, when we were in Paris, and when I was in Bridlington.

Bridlington?

Brighouse or Bridlington — some awful gig in the old days. Nice town, rotten gig. Yeah, it just happened, and it's in the song — but the characters are more extreme. Caricature people. Probably I wanted the incident to happen and kind of stage managed it. I put two people through that incident, and I was one of them.

The emergence of "Lola" was like, "Wow, here's the Kinks back again."

It's like the old thing: "Come back — but I haven't even been away." It's strange. Some people can work eight hours a day, but the media somehow makes it look like they work really hard. I work 24 and it looks like I work one day a year.

I'm doing one gig at the Rainbow this year, and I've worked like a dog. I'm not sure that I want to do this gig — I think something bad's going to happen, I don't know what. I get premonitions.

(Ray recalls one occasion in the '60s when he got the feeling before).

It was at Cardiff. Dave and Mick used to live together; they used to have a house together. They were having arguments all the time, and Mick had beaten Dave up the night before. Dave had two black eyes when he went onstage, and they had to have separate dressing rooms.

We did the first number, and that was okay. Second number, I did the count-in — one two three four — and nothing happened. Dave had turned round and said something to Mick, he'd turned round to start the song, and Mick had picked up his cymbal and hit him over the head.

He had nine stitches in it.

Mick ran off. The police wanted to arrest him for GBH. We didn't think they'd ever make it up — it was really serious. They still don't talk about it.

We're very strong. I've got to the stage where whether the audience wants us or not they can never ruffle us, because we're strong now.

I saw you play what must be the archetypal non-Kinks gig, one of those big festivals.

Bickershaw.

Were you drunk?

How can you be drunk when it's freezing cold and there isn't a bar within miles and you've just got a grotty little caravan to sit in? One of our promotion men's girlfriend had been killed in an air crash that day — he didn't know until he watched the news. He was crying. How can you be drunk in a situation like that?

I HAVE TO sometimes watch myself during "Alcohol", because I've got this drink in my hand, and again I've got a character . . . and I have to become that character, so I start drinking. One night I nearly finished a bottle of Tequila during that song.

How did you get into The Long Distance Piano Player?

I was asked to do it.

That was Granada, wasn't it?

No, it was the Beeb.

You were playing a piano player?

Yeah, I was playing some stooge who wants to break the world record. It was a good exercise for me, because I don't do it twelve months a year — I had to do it all in three weeks. I had a lot of pressures, because we had another tour coming up, and I had to think about that at rehearsals. I was getting phone calls from America, phone calls from New Orleans . . .

At the end of the year I wanted to make up those three weeks because that three weeks took six months out of me.

How did you get into Percy, the music for which I'm not familiar with.

The music for which *I'm* not very familiar with, because I spent all my time with a stopwatch, y'know.

In a way *Percy* was really good training, having to write with a stopwatch. The same as "Arthur" was good training because I worked with a script. *Piano Player* was good because I worked with theatre.

They all brought me together. They're not always good things for my career, but they help.

Because I make everything else work for me. Every incident leads to something else.

NEXT WEEK: The Kinks in the '70s

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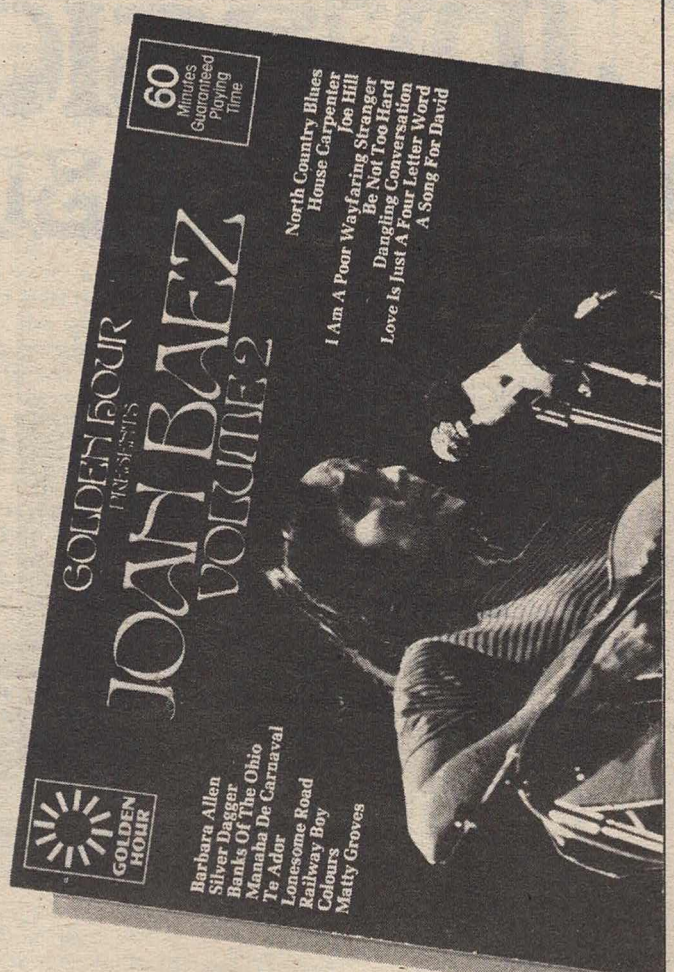

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GOLDEN HOUR RECORDS GROUP Precision Tapes Ltd

SOME THINGS just stick in your mind. Like the very first time I ever met Dennis Wilson, during The Beach Boys' first expedition to Britain. I was a musician at the time, and by sheer coincidence we were both appearing on a Radio Luxembourg EMI-sponsored plug show with the highly imaginative title *Friday Spectacular*.

Perhaps the only lip-sync radio show in history, *Friday Spectacular* was taped each week in EMI House before an audience of around 300 precocious little horrors who knew it was all a con and acted accordingly.

After being plied with free samples courtesy of the Milk Marketing Board, these kids were more interested in seeing who could belch the loudest during transmission than in who was up on stage trying to impress the EMI warloads. Gary Glitter, or Paul Raven as he was then called, was also on the bill.

Brian Wilson was still an active member of the candy-striped shirted Californians, who were on a whistle-stop Eurotour to promote "Help Me Rhonda".

It was all a bit of a lark.

Backstage, Mike Love made no secret that he was infatuated by programme-presenter Muriel Young's cleavage; Dennis Wilson was scoring the phone numbers of anything in skirts and over the age of consent; Carl Wilson and Al Jardine were on their best behaviour; while every few minutes someone had to be despatched to drag Bro' Brian out of the loo.

Meanwhile, a music publishing company rep was trying to persuade every act on the show to cover a Beach Boys song. I was offered "Little Deuce Coupe". Lambrettas I could relate to — but what the hell was a Little Deuce Coupe?

Anyway, I wasn't buying. My attention was distracted by the sound of the Brothers Wilson trying to sort out the chords of some Beatles songs.

My guitarist and I ended up teaching them both chords and lyrics to The Fabs' "I Should Have Known Better" and "Tell Me Why". And a few months later both songs appeared on The Beach Boys' best-selling "Party" album.

WE'VE ALL grown beards since then. On a recent visit to The Beach Boys' Brothers Studio at Santa Monica I hadn't been inside more than half-an-hour when Dennis suddenly leapt up from behind the control desk, wrapped a pair of cans around my ears and, joined by his extrovert friend Baron Stewart, began laying down backing vocal tracks for Dennis' first solo album, "Pacific Ocean Blues".

By the way Dennis, my bill's in the mail . . .

BRO' BRIAN may be projected as the creative, eccentric brains of the organisation, but it has always been left up to Dennis Wilson to live out The Beach Boys fantasy of the All-American Red Blooded Male. While the others count the calories and meditate on mountains, Dennis is the only one who avidly follows the outdoor pursuits The Beach Boys songs have celebrated.

Dennis is an extremely physical person. When the pressures of recording become too intense he doesn't lock himself away in a closet. He lets off steam the only way he knows how.

This afternoon a thrash on a Captain Fantastic Pinball table isn't enough, and so he straps on a pair of speed-racing rollerskates and tears up 10 miles of Santa Monica's sidewalks. And later on he enters a powerboat race along the seaboard.

Come to think of it, drummers are a bit like bass players. Dark horses.

Perhaps it has something to do with being stuck either right at the back of the stage or to one side. For the most part, the rhythm section isn't called upon to do anything but lay down a backbeat, and that kinda job gives a man plenty of time to think and build up frustrations.

The result is that bass players and drummers are frequently the first sidemen to cut loose and make solo albums.

So Dennis has been recording his own album.

After just one more week of overdubbing, re-mixing and programming the set he has co-produced with Gregg Jakobson will be ready for delivery to James Guercio's CBS-distributed Caribou label.

During a break in the session, Dean Torrence (the Dean in Jan And . . .) arrives in the control room with a selection of visually attractive album sleeve mock-ups. Dennis agrees with Dean's choice and guarantees the artwork will be completed around the same time as the mastertape.

Dennis has recorded 14 songs (tentatively titled): "Rainbow", "Thoughts Of You", "Taking Off", "Time", "You And I", "Tug Of Love", "Pacific Ocean Blues", "River Song", "Dreamer", "Schoolgirl", "What's Wrong", "Moonshine", "Friday Night", "Farewell My Friend", "I Don't Know", "Holy Man" as well as re-recording "Only With You" from off "Holland". From these tracks he'll make a final selection.

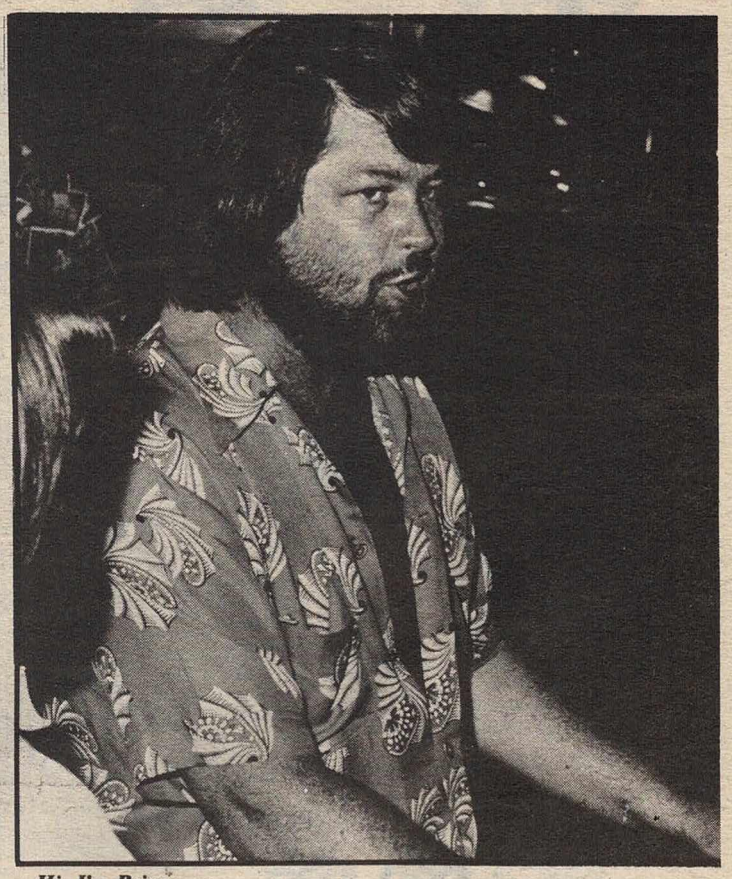
This isn't the first time he has flown solo. In 1963 he and Gary Usher cut some singles as The Four Speeds, and, as late as 1969, cut an obscure British single "Sound Of Free" as Rumbo.

But "Pacific Ocean Blues" (originally entitled "Freckles") is his first serious commitment.

Instead of hauling a bunch of El Lay's finest into the studio and completing the project in a few weeks, Wilson has chosen to play almost every instrument himself. It's taken him nine months. The sound is impressionistic in texture, and from what I've heard of it the music appears to be an ethereal reflection of the album's title.

He tells me that "Pacific Ocean Blues" is totally extraneous from any official Beach Boys project. It's his brainchild and his alone. The only stipulation placed on it by Warner Brothers' President Mo Ostin was that Bro' Brian should not contribute material, and that the rest of the gang should not sign on as deck-hands.

IT'S COMMON knowledge that since signing The Beach Boys and Brothers in 1970, Warner-Reprise have been less than ecstatic about the group's recording schedule and their selling power. According to one Warner Executive, up until the release of "15 Big Ones" The Beach Boys had only scored one gold album for the office wall.



Hi, I'm Brian.

Waitin' for The Man

Waitin' for Brian Wilson, to be precise. Next to surfin' that's been THE BEACH BOYS' fave leisure pursuit. But now Brian is back and Dennis is making a solo album and . . . ROY CARR reports

The hey-day of The Candy-Striped Surfers.

Originally, "15 Big Ones" — one of three albums The Beach Boys were working on simultaneously to fulfil their contractual obligations to Warner-Reprise — was intended as The Beach Boys "Pin-ups". But as it transpired, only about half of the album was given over to re-running other artists' oldies: songs like "On Broadway" and "You've Lost That Loving Feelin' " being shelved. "The Beach Boys Love You" roots album is just out as I write, and a third set is in preparation.

Actually, The Beach Boys' problems started showing as far back as 1966. After the controversy that greeted "Pet Sounds", the subsequent emergence of The Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper" motivated Bro' Brian to abort his meisterwerk "Smile" and withdraw even further into his paranoid shell, Nine of the 15 "Smile" tracks were dispersed over subsequent albums, but consecutive collections like "Smiley Smile", "Wild Honey", "Friends", and "20/20" did little to transform The Beach Boys from a successful singles band into a hotshot album act.

And the move to Warner-Reprise did little either. "Sunflower" — their first offering under the new agreement — was the last album on which Bro' Brian participated.

Warner-Reprise went into shock. The Beach Boys without Brian Wilson in the driving seat just wasn't on.

Under pressure, "Surf's Up" — a collection of old unreleased masters plus some new material — temporarily pulled the band out of a skid, partly due to much emphasis being made of The Boy Wonder's involvement.

But "Carl & The Passions — So Tough" / "Pet Sounds" bombed. And the costly, highly-publicised "Holland" junket was rejected and refurbished before being given a release date.

Allegedly, "Holland" didn't recoup its production costs, while "Concert" — originally a single album — had to be re-submitted before being unleashed.

Taking into consideration that The Beach Boys have been far from prolific, it's a wonder that Dennis Wilson should feel able to devote so much time and energy to producing the first of what he insists will be half-a-dozen solo albums.

"My material," he states, running his hands through his shag of hair, "doesn't necessarily concur with what The Beach Boys are doing. When there's a quorum there's a vote, and that's it. I also happen to respect Brian's judgement on such matters".

Dennis Wilson has been quoted as saying: "Brian *is* The Beach Boys. He *is* the band. We're *his* messengers. *He* is all of it. Period. We're nothing. *He's* everything".

He's still adamant. This time he tells me: "Everything I do is a stepping stone from Brian — he's taught me so much".

Whether he and the rest of the band are just playing up The Living Legend syndrome of The Troubled Genius, no one will ever admit. That's the party line and everyone toes it.

When tackled about their sporadic releases, the reply has always been that The Beach Boys are awaiting Bro' Brian's availability.

Now, it's not that Al, Carl, Dennis and Mike (or Bruce Johnston) are without talent, but it certainly does often appear that, as a collective unit, The Beach Boys are reluctant to take a major step without Brian's involvement — even though Brian's Wilson's greatest achievements have often been misunderstood. (It's a fact, that both the band and Capitol had second thoughts about "Pet Sounds" when they first heard it.)

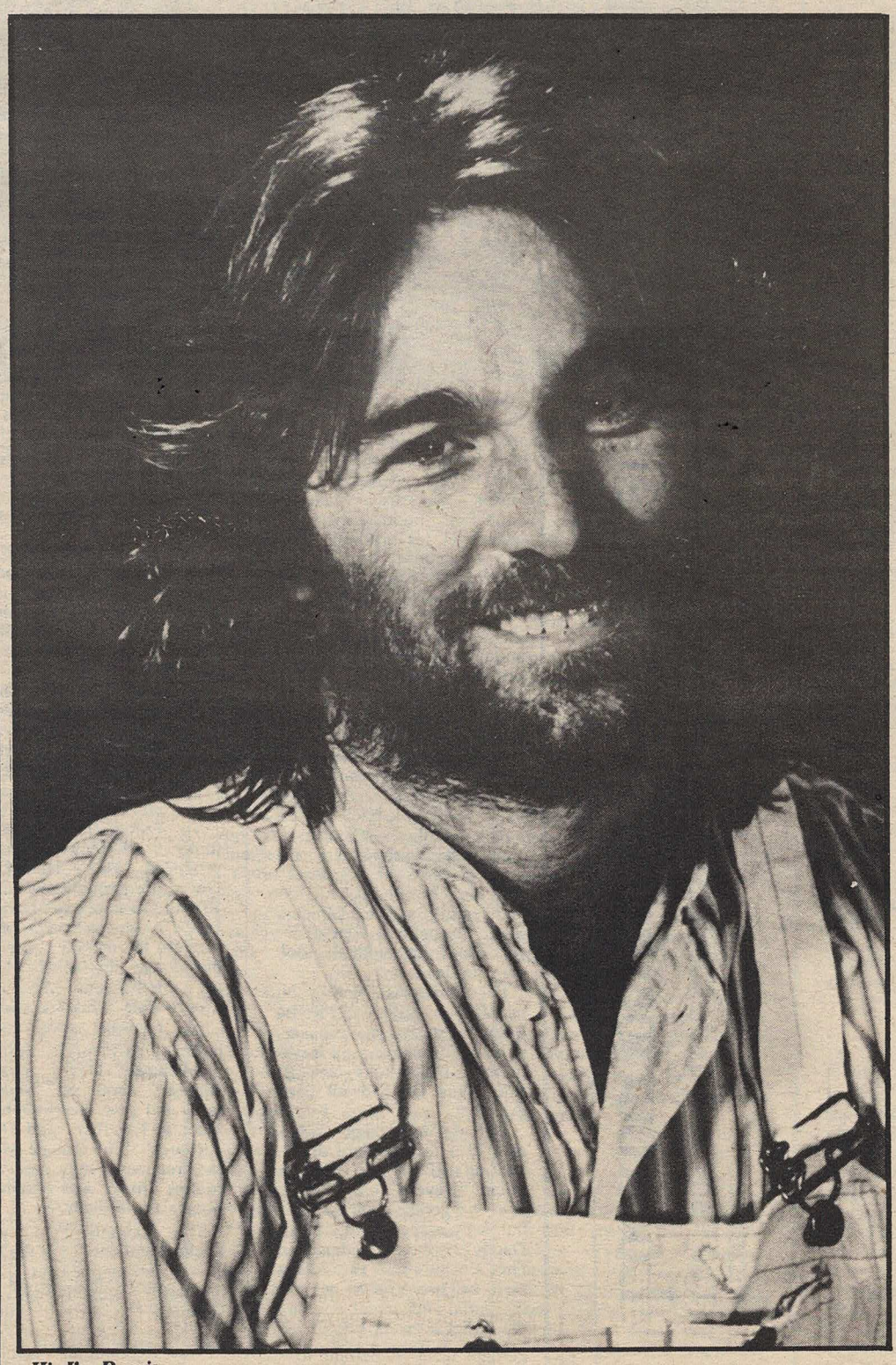
Dennis Wilson can't offer what he feels to be an adequate explanation for depleted record sales and other similar traumas.

"I guess," he begins, "maybe the people who normally buy records just didn't want to buy ours . . . it's hard to try and understand why . . . truthfully, I dunno.

"As an artist," he continues, "and I'm speaking for myself, I have always been a little intimidated by Brian's immense talent."

He pauses. "It's like if you're in a team and the person who plays in the position you prefer also happens to be a far superior player. You tend to stand back and help his game. And like I've already stated, Brian *is* The Beach Boys."

Waiting on Brian Wilson's recovery has been a long, drawn-out process. In the meantime, Capitol Records' re-packaging programme has kept the band hot poop by proxy, with compilations like "Endless Summer" and "Spirit Of America" topping the American best-sellers.



Hi, I'm Dennis.

Dennis says he doesn't feel haunted by an illustrious past and the problems of living up to their reputation as *The* All-American Rock Band. But one doesn't have to resort to force to get him to admit that towards the close of the 60s, the Boys were beached by their American fans even though abroad their stature remained intact.

"Yeah," he sighs' "The Beach Boys went through a big slump. This is what happened. At the end of the 60s there was a transition from surfin', and the record companies were so used to promoting us as surfers that they didn't realise things were changing.

"With people like Jimi Hendrix coming up, it was an image that was extremely difficult for us to try and outlive. It was a time of great change and we found it almost impossible to shake off our old identity."

Ironically, during the Beatles Boom, The Beach Boys didn't have to contend with such problems. In terms of popularity, they were at their zenith. But with Second Assault, Americans suddenly grew apathetic.

"I'd put it much stronger than that, they ignored us," he insists. "There's no use denying it, we suddenly went from being a very large group into being a very small group again."

He's not exaggerating — The Beach Boys actually went back to playing small clubs like the Whiskey A Go Go on Sunset Strip.

"Maybe," he reflects, "at the time, we were in the right frame of mind. Look, I could offer all kinds of theories . . . but the plain fact is that The Beach Boys went through a big dip in popularity."

How did you react?

"It broke my heart. It hurt. It's no use me saying it didn't. Believe me, it really does hurt to suddenly realise that you're *not* what you used to be. And that people don't want to know."

AFTER 15 years in business, The Beach Boys' fortunes have now turned full circle. Despite their sparse vinyl output, they're one of Planet Earth's major concert attractions.

Dennis Wilson still does a mental double-take on that count.

The final stage of their comeback began last summer. Bro' Brian had finally gotten out of bed and returned to active public life.

"Fifteen Big Ones" — the album around which his artistic re-entry was enacted and according to reliable sources, The Beach Boys first all-new album in 42 months — took a supporting role in the carnival, however, because most people seemed more intrigued by Brian's presence than the actual purpose of his resurrection.

While some treated the album as The Second Coming, the more cynical viewed it as a Mad Hatter's Tea Party. The music took a backseat as in interview after interview Brian Wilson acted . . . er, a little weird and fuelled his own Madcap Mystique.

Dennis doesn't really give a shit about what people think.

"We were more concerned with Brian's return to the group. Everyday he just gets better and better — more so when he's in the studio. And that's all that really matters."

"He's lost weight, he's healthy again and working well. I suppose a sign of any artist's true greatness is when, against all odds, they make a successful comeback."

So the Beach Boys have been let off the hook, but Dennis doesn't disguise the years of anxiety.

"I'll be truthful with you. There were many times when I'd look at my brother and think to myself, maybe he won't ever pull it together again. He went through a lot of bad times. Drugs didn't help.

"If we had lost Brian, I guess we'd have had to go on without him but we always felt in our hearts that things would turn out the way they have and we were prepared to wait and wait.

"But there were other things as well. Michael and his meditation . . . there were our divorces . . . Carl fighting the draft board . . . so many things can come down at the same time, and they did. Also, when it came to the matter of business affairs, I have to admit The Beach Boys weren't the smartest guys around."

THINGS HAVE changed quite drastically. They've tidied up their affairs both marital and business, taken stock of where the money is coming from, and, more important, where it's going to.

The album that led them back into the big time however, fared much better in America than it did in Europe.

And it's an album with which Dennis is dis-satisfied. He insists it should have been all-original, and that an oldies album should have been shelved for later. But he was out-voted on that score.

Dennis puts the lack of success abroad down to marketing — bearing in mind EMI's TV blitzkreig here for their "20 Golden Greats".

As a matter of interest, at the peak of its sales EMI's "20 Golden Greats" sold more copies than the combined sales of Britain's next four best-selling albums.)

However. Dennis isn't perturbed that the old still continues to outsell the new. He's philosophical on the subject. "It's all part of the same thing," he muses. "Our roots go right back to 'Surfin' ' and we don't try to dis-associate ourselves from our past. I'm honoured by our achievements and proud to still be around, so ultimately it doesn't really matter if the public bought more copies of '20 Golden Greats' than '15 Big Ones'. The one thing that they all had in common was that they were buying The Beach Boys".

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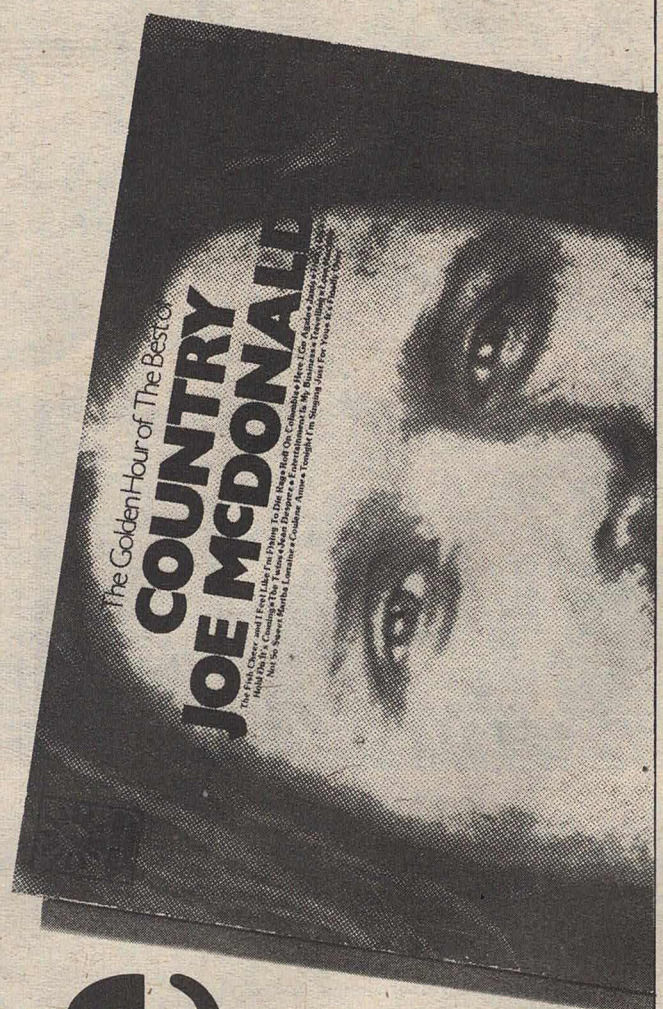

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The Fish Cheer and I Feel like I'm Fixing to die Rag/Love Machine/Tricky Dicky.
Look out for the rest of the Golden Hour Series.

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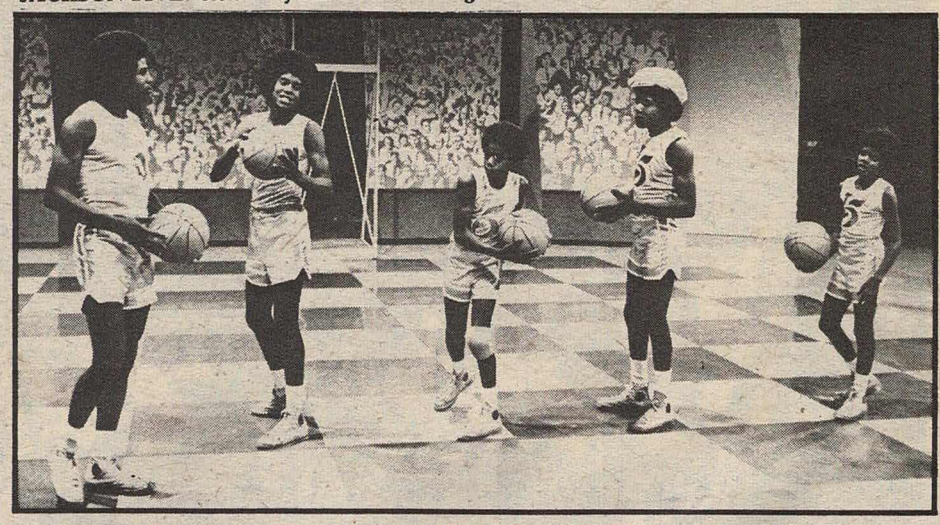
JACKSON FIVE: victims of the Motown ball game.



J5: The Sublimation Of The Sublime

THE JACKSON FIVE
Anthology (Motown)

THIS REVIEW is late partly because I've been prevaricating. See, the J5 are the only act in years whose records (singles, anyway) I've actually collected. That said, I'm very reluctant to admit just how little this recorded history of the band's Motown career inspires me.

It seems I've spent years making excuses for the Five on the strength of their shattering first year. Amazingly, on checking *Rock File,* you'll find that not only have they never scored a No. 1 here, but they haven't topped the US chart for six years.

"Anthology" kicks off with that fantastic foursome, "I Want You Back", "ABC", "The Love You Save" and "I'll Be There" — Christmas '69 to Christmas '70.

At a time when Motown seemed washed up, these five kids appeared out of the blue with ecstatically exciting music. "I Want You Back" seemed to shoot Tamla into yet another dimension of perfection, as well as opening new vistas for a driving soul style whose energy stemmed from explicit small group interplay rather than relentless drums powering heavy orchestrations.

Even more astonishing was the fact that the ages of the vocal group working alongside this brilliant band of session men ranged from a high of 18 to a low of a mere 11 — and that 11-year-old was the lead singer. Perhaps Michael's exuberant, faultless performance over his brothers' intricately beautiful back-up was the very thing that spurred the musicians to such heights.

With that triumph behind them, The Corporation, the anonymous team of writers/producers/arrangers who masterminded "I Want You Back", could be excused a couple of soundalikes.

"ABC" was okay — a little discomfiting in its harping on juvenalia, not so well meshed as "I Want You Back", but it bubbled well. "The Love You Save" combined the drive of "I Want You Back" with the softer focus of "ABC" and featured a *great* moment when Jermaine's hoarse 15-year-old voice suddenly took over the lead.

For Christmas '70 they hit us with a ballad, "I'll Be There", a misty-eyed romance: pure cornball slop, and it was perfect. Incidentally, the B-sides thus far had all been excellent.

But as "Anthology" moves into 1971 the standard drops. "Mama's Pearl" is conventional, "Never Can Say Goodbye" is a good stab at maturity but lazily orchestrated, "Sugar Daddy" is more evidence of The Corporation re-working their original groove without the initial excitement . . . and then Michael went solo.

Elliott Willensky's "Got To Be There" is a weird one, a completely bland base for Michael to demonstrate his vocal control as he held excruciatingly high notes for ages. Good trick, but so what?

So Michael was a teen idol, that's what. The '71 "Maybe Tomorrow" album, Stateside version, had an inner sleeve like something out of *16* magazine. Pushing them in the order of Michael, Jermaine, Marlon, Tito, Jackie, it exhorted fans to send for autographed photos, stickers, magazines, posters and paraphernalia galore.

Suddenly the group were out there in the chicklets' bedrooms scrapping with The Osmonds over every square inch of wall space.

As we move into side two and '72, the music changes accordingly. Twee is hardly the word for Michael's "Rockin' Robin" and the Five's "Little Bitty Pretty One". Even more dismally, the songs were evidently the result of archive scanning for the most perkily juvenile numbers Mel Larson and Jerry Marcellino could locate.

Things looked up again later in '72 with three Hal Davis productions: Michael's "I Wanna Be Where You Are", a light, vigorous song; "Ain't No Sunshine", which has lost some of its charisma with time; and the only J5 record to ever chart higher here than in the USA, "Lookin' Through The Windows".

The Five's entry in the great teenybop war of Christmas '72, the song ridiculed the artifacts matched against it: "Long Haired Lover From Liverpool"; "Crazy Horses" and "Ben", Michael Jackson's own mawkish ballad.

"Windows", a Clifton Davis song (who?), is structurally bizarre and less oppressively produced than virtually any J5 record, but if there was a direction here to be followed nobody bothered.

With one brief stop to shove a little garish sparkle into Jackson Browne's "Doctor My Eyes", the next couple of years were pretty awful; side three of "Anthology" is quite charmless.

To follow his pleasantly funky, Johnny Bristol-produced "That's How Love Goes", Jermaine (now all of 18) cut the smoochy "Daddy's Home". Michael's '73 offerings are the messily conceived but almost carried off "Morning Glow" and the Matt Munro-style "Music And Me".

As for the group, they bashed joylessly through "Hallelujah Day", phased aimlessly about on "Skywriter", and gave Berry Gordy's "Get It Together" and Deke Richards' "The Boogie Man" the treatments they deserved: funless funk and brainless boogie respectively.

The Jackson Five, with Michael still only 15 at the end of '73, were clapped out — and it's hardly surprising since, not counting "Greatest Hits", they'd released *thirteen albums* between them in four years.

The fourteenth, "Dancing Machine", provided them with the radical departure they needed.

The title track single gave the J5 their biggest US hit since "I'll Be There". Even so, I hated it and the album, four tracks of which appear on "Anthology". It's only when you see the awfulness of their '73 work laid out here that you realise *any* direction was better than none at all.

For the first time in ages the Five's producers seemed to acknowledge that they weren't just working in some cosy, complacent vacuum where they could recycle previous eras' dross for a doting captive audience.

The company had entered the age of electronics, courtesy of Norman Whitfield and copyists, and the age of concepts, courtesy of Marvin Gaye and copyists. For the "Dancing Machine" set, strings and horns and woodwind were out and clavinets, moogs, fuzz guitars and electric piano were in.

The singers were slightly incidental, particularly on the album's centrepiece, "I Am Love"; which was — unsurprisingly — a dancing machine. Still, at least the music *moved,* and the kids were competent enough to move with it.

Michael is actually in great voice on the tracks selected here: the scurrying "The Life Of The Party" and the funky "Dancing Machine", both Hal Davis productions and less of a departure than the steely Larson and Marcellino numbers — the neo-Whitfield "Whatever You Got, I Want" and "I Am Love".

Moving from calculated romance to jet-powered space-jive, "I Am Love" is superb, but the Five are alarmingly sublimated to the convoluted arrangement.

The last fling for Motown comes on "Anthology" with three tracks produced by Brian Holland, of all people. He puts that Whitfield/John McGhee guitar on his old Supremes number (wasn't it?), "Forever Came Today", which is pretty good. Michael gets the pleasant, undemanding but not too sugary "We're Almost There" and "Just A Little Bit Of You".

Maybe Holland whispered in their ears: they left the label pretty soon after.

The best track on "Anthology" is the first. Motown took something wonderful and milked it dry, adding an Osmonds grin, Cassidy sentiment and a disco leviathan to manipulate The Jackson Five's precocious abilities to its own ends.

And yet . . . The B-side of the J5's last real Motown single, Michael's "Just A Little Bit Of You", is another cut from the "Forever, Michael" set called "Dear Michael", on which he reads a lovelorn fan letter — *"You'll probably never even read this letter"* — and as the song fades he vows to write her back.

And after six years of being ground down by the machine, he *still* sounds like he means it.

Phil McNeill

PLATTERS

The Clash: Jones, Strummer, Simenon — no "politicians' fancy dress" for these chaps . . .

THE CLASH
War On Inner City Front

THE CLASH
The Clash (CBS)

VINYLISED AFFIRMATION of the worth of The Clash. One in the face for the prejudiced, the ignorant and the complacent.

"I don't wanna hear about what the rich are doing / I don't wanna go to where the rich are going / They think they're so clever, they think they're so right / But the truth is only known . . . by guttersnipes."

Those sentiments, expressed in "Garage Land", are backed up in the 14 songs on the album. Jones and Strummer write with graphic perception about contemporary Great British urban reality as though it's suffocating them. Their frame of reference is a mirror reflection of the kind of 1977 white working-class experiences that only seem like a cliche to those people who haven't had to live through them.

Their songs don't lie. They crystallize growing up and getting out like no band ever have before. But they wear home-made battle fatigues, *not* Holy Man dog collars, *not* Politician fancy dress.

They put their emotion-wired imagery across with rock that displays an inherent sense of energy control exerted over the speeding Sound Of The Westway. They create membrane-scorching tension, a natural feel of dynamics and exhilarating rock 'n' roll excitement. They say something and they make you wanna dance.

Classic rock performs both functions. The Old Masters had that quality in another time. This generation has The Clash.

"Janie Jones" opens the album with buzzsaw staccato chords as Jones and Strummer interplay guitars over the obsessive drive of the rhythm section, Simenon joining them for an on-the-terraces chant of their anti-harmonies.

Repetitive, addictive lyrics, the words howled by Strummer in his usual manner of making them discernible only to the people who *should* hear them — anyone who wants a riot of his/her own.

"Remote Control" is about the type of powers that Orwell forecast and that arrived sooner than he expected: the Tin Gods who butchered the Anarchy tour because they were terrified of something they didn't understand, didn't want to understand.

Jones occasionally sings about something he detests in such an inverted, celebratory way that the sardonic joy expresses his (and The Clash's) contempt far more effectively than any direct tirade.

"It's so grey in London Town / Panda cars crawling around / Here it comes / Eleven o'clock / Where can we go now?"

Strummer does the same and brilliantly on two of their finest songs: "London's Burning", the open wound, written in the middle of the night from a high-rise cage, and "Career Opportunities", their statement of signing-on reality.

The former is part of the frantic guided tour that Strummer gives of the futuristic slums surrounding the Westway inner-city flyover and the latter is the ecstatic shouting of the word "CAREEEEEEEEER!" after the bitter defiance of the lyrics:

They're gonna have to introduce conscription / They're gonna have to take away my prescription / If they wanna get me making toys / If they wanna get me where I got no choice / Career Opportunities / The ones that never knock / Every job they offer you is to keep you out the dock / Career Opportunities / The ones that never knock."

Strummer is almost incredulous as he recites a long list of nowhere jobs that they tried to sell him before eventually reaching the decision to send him away for rehabilitation.

The echo process used by producer Mickey Foote when Joe cries "OY!" shows how his production of the single and the album have about the same differential as a rabbit punch and a napalm bomb. He's done 'em proud and they were right to believe that spiritual affinity runs deeper than music biz reputation.

"White Riot" itself appears here as a furious, raw, live version, including an unexpurgated Strummer solo.

The demand for a culture of our own while retaining a respect for the heritage of others is an attitude defined in their magnificent tribute to J.A. This takes the form of a six minute version of the reggae number "Police And Thieves", the Trenchtown hit of the summer of 1976 written by Lee Perry / Junior Murvin and the only non-Strummer / Jones song on the album.

Strummer's vocal proves skin pigmentation has absolutely nothing to do with soul as Simenon's casual offbeat bass line rolls around the sparse chord chopping of Mick Jones — beautiful track and indicative of their willingness to experiment with any musical form that emotionally *moves* . .

On either side of "Police And Thieves" are "Protex Blue", a one minute 45 tribute to the method most of us don't prefer, and "48 Hours" which concerns the hedonistic horror-show of speeding through a weekend non-stop to taste as much and as many as possible before the five-day drag arrives.

"Monday's coming like a jail on wheels / You know a girl, yeah? / Well, she's bound to be rude / But 48 hours need 48 thrills / Cheap thrills / Any kind of thrills . . ."

The sadness and futility behind our desperate search for good times, Strummer's vocal redolent of Kerouac's Red Brick Vision; the boredom of the daytime red brick houses forever waiting behind the promise of night-time city neons. And never being able to admit to yourself that the promise is not true.

"I'm So Bored With The USA" could be taken as selective nihilism but, although Yankee Go Home is the basic gist, Strummer barks his vocal out over some fine inter-riffing with just enough sly mockery underneath the surface belligerence to keep the song out of the abyss cluttered with bands writing generalisations, platitudes and politico nursery rhymes . . .

"Yan-kee detectives are always on TV / Coz killers in America work seven days a week . . ."

"Hate And War" is about the currency of the times we live in and the band's acceptance of the fact that violence can only be met with the same.

"I have the will to survive / I cheat if I can't win / If someone locks me out I kick my way back in / And if I get aggression I'll give 'em two-times back".

The music's not really strong enough to fully complement the lyrics of the track until Strummer takes over lead vocal from Jones near the end and, as Simenon and Jones chant the title, he cries out a few of those quasi-throwaway lines that he scatters all over the album . . .

"I hate Englishmen / Just as bad as wops / I hate all the blindness / I hate all the cops."

"What's My Name" and "Cheat" are both musically and lyrically Casualty Ward Rock. The first is the kind of gratuitous and random GBH that you used to inflict on the away team's supporters' personality crisis temporarily forgotten as you act like a Pig and feel like a God. Strummer is crazed as he tries to articulate the desperation of a screwed-up, wanton thug.

"What the hell is wrong with me? / I'm not who I want to be / I got nicked for fighting in the road, / The judge didn't even know . . . what's my name!"

And there's "Cheat" with its pessimistic dog-eat-cat lyrics, the theme as offensive as it is defensive — hurt them before they hurt you, before they can hurt the people you love. When how you play the game isn't important, it's whether you win or not.

"I get VIOLENT when I'm fucked-up / I get SILENT when I'm drugged-up / Don't use the rules / They're not for you, they're for the fools / And you're a fool if you don't know that / You better CHEAT if you wanna survive . . ."

A Seventies acceptance of violence as a fact of life harnessed to a vicious treble sound taut with repressed aggression, anger and energy — the twitching speed-burn paranoia of too much sulphate in too little time screaming for an outlet. . .

It's the perfect noise for a song like "Deny" about getting stitched-up by a girl with a habit . . .

"Deny you're such a liar? / Selling your honour all over town / You said you'd given it up / Gone and kicked it in the head / You said you ain't had none for weeks / But, baby, I seen your arm / Baby, I seen your arm / Deny you're such a liar?"

The Clash have made an album that consists of some of the most exciting rock 'n' roll in contemporary music. Whether the great mass of British Youth can get into the sometimes painful but incisive reality of what the band are about is another matter. But they chronicle our lives and what it's like to be young in the Stinking Seventies better than any other band, and they do it with style, flash and excitement. The Clash have got it all.

I urge you to get your hands on a copy of this album. The strength of the nation lies in its youth.

Tony Parsons

GROVER WASHINGTON JR.
Inner City Blues (Kudu)
A Secret Place (Kudu)

THE ACCEPTABLE face of funk. If the name is new, you might remember "Mister Magic", a single that caused sufficient waves in the R&B charts to get Washington name checks both in the rock and jazz fields.

The man from Buffalo, New York, plays a mellow battery of saxophones in the manner of the new West Coast laid back jazz league as opposed to the coffee table funk of brash East Coast stars, the Brecker Brothers or Donald Byrd.

In fact, funk is probably not a suitable introductory description of Grover's style, as that has current overtones of ersatz big-boom, burger-joint top leaguers like George Benson at one end of the market and the tight fusion variations *ad nauseam* of Corea, Clarke and The Headhunters at the other.

Instead Washington is strictly a jazzer, with a background of paying dues with Don Gardner and Johnny Smith and a desire to blow as melodically as mid-Sixties Miles and Coltrane — who didn't need no clavinets to get down with a vengeance.

"Inner City Blues" is a re-release from '71 and marks an early date with producer Creed Taylor, a partnership that has lasted.

The track choices reflect Washington's approach, with class interpretations being the order of the day. Unlike the mass produced new wave sax shouters, he has soul. Two Marvin Gaye numbers, the title track and "Mercy Mercy Me (The Ecology)" don't prove that by definition but the playing does: able support and texture from bassist Ron Carter, super smooth guitarist Eric Gale and a host of band men that includes Idris Muhammad, Airto Moreira and Thad Jones.

The sound gells; it isn't a session hack job. My only grouse is that the strings occasionally intrude; they're thoughtful, but Bob James' arrangements are too safely cultured. Only "Ain't No Sunshine" doesn't lend itself easily to the mood. The tight jazz pure and simple of "Until It's Time For You To Go" and "I Loves You Porgy" are blue notes par excellence.

"A Secret Place" is far better all round, a real progression with the excess weight trimmed down to a neat ten piece.

The '77 Washington doesn't tell no lies — four long work outs utilising band material and Hancock's "Dolphin Dance"— slow, stately adventuresome rhythms that fans of Hathaway, The Crusaders and Merl Saunders can easily handle.

Gale plays a lot like Larry Carlton, so no complaints there, while Ralph Macdonald and Harvey Mason provide slinky percussive leads for bassist Anthony Jackson to bite on. Washington and pianist Dave Grusin maintain the traditional element, but there are plenty of hard angles to prevent the mixture sticking.

If you're looking for something to stretch out the late hours then Grover Washington is as seductive as they get. A very pleasant alternative.

Max Bell

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Southside Johnny and assorted Asbury Jukes.

Vaulting Ambition O'erleaps Itself?

SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY & THE ASBURY JUKES
This Time It's For Real (Epic)

GOOD MORNING world. It's three hours since Southside Johnny & The Asbury Jukes wound up their British tour with a triumphant headline gig at the Rainbow, and now I'm listening to this album, trying to figure it out.

If you've been to see that blistering live show, with those wild horns strafing in military formation over Willie Rush's high powered guitar on strategically dynamic wide-screen arrangements, think before you buy.

And if you've heard the sleazy first album, "I Don't Want To Go Home", or the sweat'n'swagger live official bootleg, think before you buy too.

This is a brave album. Southside has attempted to set himself as ring master of a 1950s Singing Orchestral Circus, piling his ten-piece band under a nine-piece string section and bringing in vocal quartets on three tracks.

He's chucked the whole lot at producer Miami Steve Van Zandt (who also seems to have tried to rewrite the entire streetcorner songbook by donating eight classically styled songs, three with help from Bruce Springsteen) and just hoped that 'Sugar' Miami will catch most of it.

Bearing in mind the sheer physical strain Southside appears to undergo in conducting and controlling his ten men onstage it wouldn't surprise me to hear that cutting this extravaganza with twice as many personnel had hospitalised the guy.

In fact, Johnny Lyon does fine. I'm not so sure about Miami — but then I'm not sure what the intention was. I suspect they've basically tried to cut an orchestral pop/R&B album which retains the individuality of each instrument, rather than channelling the entire sound into one exhilarating mess as in days of yore. In other words, they're trying to stereo-ise a mono effect.

I think they could do it. They have the proficiency. But this album takes a lot of listening before you can hear it properly — Miami's going to have to sharpen up his production.

The most accessible songs here are the sparsest — that means they've only got about a dozen instruments aboard. The rest have a tendency to swim about before your ears, the vocals, melodies and solos fighting out of clouds of steamy atmospherics.

It's a very American album. Not only is the album sleeve littered with a total of around a hundred highly ethnic names, counting credits, dedications, and extras, and not only is their back alley grease gang image 100% Leonard Bernstein, but the music . . .

The music is alien to me. It's the antithesis of Britrock, as immutably represented by Free, honed to the bone. An English kid can revere from afar, but I think the Limey with a true understanding of that densely orchestrated, vocally complex end of rock 'n' soul (as represented by Spector, Leiber, Stoller, neo-doowop Smokey etc) is a rare creature indeed.

Best track on the album is, sadly, not an original. It's "Without Love", which rides with breathtaking ease and a hint of reverb over muted strings and horns, Rush's organ tone guitar leading Southside's superb vocal through a relaxed version of one of The Jukes' stage highlights.

Apparently it's going out as a single (as it should have done to start with) to replace the month-old "Little Girl So Fine", the Springsteen/Van Zandt/Drifters rehash on which Charlie Thomas, *(unofficial?)* Drifters sing back-up to Southside. Cue Spanish trumpets and classic cliches *("kisses sweeter than wine"?!!)* — but "Little Girl So Fine" is certainly more, er, credible than the mechanical back-seat-of-the-movies hokum that Johnny Moore's Drifters were pushing up our charts so frequently not long ago.

Southside's use of his vocal groups is strange. A quartet is a different kettle of fish to Ronnie Spector or Lee Dorsey, both of whom Lyon engaged in vocal duets on the last album. Either they serve as rather patronised vocal back-up, like The Drifters, or they render Southside superfluous.

This is what The Satins achieve on the slow, sanctified "First Night". It's excellent, like an antecedent of The Righteous Brothers but with a sophisticated vocal arrangement that makes Hatfield and Medley sound as musclebound as they were.

The Coasters, as a third alternative, share their archetypally humorous song, "Check Mr. Popeye", with lead bass voice Kenny Pentifallo, The Jukes' drummer. No sign of Southside again.

The rest of the album is closer to the snappy R&B flash of the live act. But "She Got Me Where She Wants Me" (which, incidentally, features one astonishing line of pure Smokey from comic trombonist Richie Rosenberg — if he can sing one line that brilliantly, why not a whole song?) bears witness to the slackness of Miami's production. The final tantalising climax is thrown away for lack of punch when the horns crest out of the big build-up.

"This Time It's For Real" rewards the very patient listener many times over, but I'd rather they came out and dragged me into the album at rhythm'n'blues rapier point.

And I do wish he'd play more harp.

Phil McNeill

QUANTUM JUMP
Barracuda (Electric)

THE FIRST Quantum Jump album, made by the same nucleus as on "Barracuda", was a patchy but pleasant affair containing several gems, including the surprisingly inactive single "The Lone Ranger".

Following guitarist Mark Warner's departure, much of the responsibility for the band's musical texture reverts to Rupert Hine, whose numerous keyboards accordingly call the shots on "Barracuda", an album that could well do for them what "Sheet Music" did for 10cc.

The album opens in deceptively simple manner with the snappy funk of "Don't Look Now". Ethereal acappella vocals lead into a smart, strutting rhythm, drummer Trevor Morais and bassist John G Perry tight as Siamese twins, good single material with a hook as subtly powerful as Ali's.

Lyrically trivial but boasting an intriguing production, it's a perfect introduction to the friendly, humorous ambience of the album as a whole.

Humour's the thing, see — a wry, subtle humour lending the band a distinctly *British* Steely Dan flavour. Take, for instance, the title-track, an affair as lyrically minimal as the Dan's "The Fez", consisting mainly of the repetition of *"Don't forget to wear/Your underwater wear"* in the background, against an eerie, stately arrangement involving the Penguin Cafe Orchestra's string section.

Two tracks deserve special mention: the enigmatic "Love Crossed Like Vines In Our Eyes" (up-tempo latin flavours laced with Ray Cooper's percussion and phased Beach Boy-ish background vocals) is quite unlike anything else I've ever heard.

"Starbright Park", perhaps the most powerful song on the album, concerns America,

The Bruce And The Slightly Bizarre

JACK BRUCE
How's Tricks (RSO)

ON HIS solo albums, Jack Bruce has revealed a knack for slightly, perversely twisting orthodox rock frameworks and producing something ultimately accessible and straightforwardly appealing.

His songs are precisely distorted, like something viewed through a fairground mirror. His careful approach to the Straight Rock Song turns what could be a boring bundle of tunes into a weighty, fresh and permanent collection.

Coupling barely unfocused instrumental settings with tentatively bizarre arrangements, his rock albums require plenty of soaking before initial alienation to the mildly blurred quality of the songs dissolves. It's invariably well worth setting up a settled relationship with a Bruce album. "How's Tricks" is no exception.

It's pleasing that Bruce has overcome trying Bley-Taylor times to sustain his seven out of ten consistency. Lyrically, Pete Brown contributes words, as usual, but, again typically, there's plenty of Bruce in their realistically downcast but optimistic mottos. There's always been something personally reassuring in hearing Bruce elegantly phrase a hardly profound but never inane Brown lyric. A good-working partnership.

This new album is closer stylistically to "Songs For A Tailor" than "Out Of The Storm". It's totally brassless, but, like "Tailor", it's more obviously varied and light than the often gloomy, laid back in anger "Out Of The Storm".

Right from the moment Bruce's voice steps spookily into "Without A Word", and his bass wrestles assuredly from the very innards of the song, there's a developing confidence, eagerly shared by the three musicians Bruce has chosen shrewdly .

Well up within Bruce's necessarily high editorial standards, as firmly effective as any Bruce band before (that's saying something) there's Hughie Burns (guitars and vocals), Tony Hymas (keyboards, vibraphone and vocals) and Simon Phillips (drums, glockenspiel and vocals).

All play like they've been Bruce partners for many a year: Burns the tricky but traditional, capable high-flying licker Bruce has long favoured, Phillips a gleeful drumming extrovert, Hymas ordinary but never over-reaching.

Burns and Hymas even get a spot each for a song; neither Burns' obvious but infectious rocker "Baby Jane" nor Hymas' attractively lilting "Something To Live For" upset the Bruce mixed-bag.

His tunes *are* Jack Bruce, mean examples of tension, execution, construction and melody. A clever writer, but also a great performer. I've always viewed his bass technique as being perhaps the most invigorating yet appropriate rock style bar that of Jannik Top, once of Magma.

Here it's as disruptive and irregular as usual. His often astonishing voice seems to get better — sort of warm ice, chilling yet soothing.

He can still chew a rocker raucously, though. Check "Johnny B 77" and "Madhouse". Note the title track, where he and the band tackle tricky rhythms without pointlessly straining for ethnic reggae wraparounds, and with discreet effectiveness. There's also a Reverse Blues, "Waiting For The Call", where, within a slightly left-of-centre 12-bar framework, Bruce sings ironically about affluence: *"Driving in my car / The only one with wheels / Got the freedom of the City / You know how good that feels."*

Good songs, fine performances, another seven out of ten Jack Bruce album. Deservedly he heads towards a place on that list of Rock Constants who will survive the New Wave purge. Another album like this will do it, and I see no evidence to suggest there's any danger of him not delivering.

Paul Morley

taking in references to Melville, Dos Passos and Kerouac — the most influential (literary) "American Dream" synthesists of their respective generations — and culminating in Hine and Elkie Brooks trading lines from Simon and Garfunkel's "America". A trenchant but nostalgic comment on the betrayal of possibilities which constitutes American history.

Musically, "Starbright Park" has a tightly-structured staccato tension which nonetheless allows some of the musicians to take sharp, concise solos, saxist Jeff Daly and trumpeter Henry Lowther especially impressive in this respect.

Now, you may think I'm pushing my parallels a bit, but I honestly believe that Quantum Jump have the intelligence and ability to become to British rock what Steely Dan are to American; there is simply too much talent in this band for them to remain unknown.

Andy Gill

CURTIS MAYFIELD
Never Say You Can't Survive (Curtom.)

SINCE THE remarkable success of the execrable Mayfield/Staples "Let's Do It Again" collaboration, Curtis Mayfield now appears to be attempting the Marvin Gaye metamorphosis from "message" music to "bed" music.

Unfortunately for Curtis, the results in his case bear little resemblance to the lush pornographies of "Let's Get It On" and "I Want You".

The trite dealings of Mayfield's recent "Give, Get, Take & Have" debacle are continued here and all suffer from a ruthless lack of melody and jobsworth musical approach.

The upper-register idiosyncrasy of Curtis' voice, satisfying, harrowing and majestically pained when allied to worthwhile material, as on the "Back To The World" and "America Today" sets, has now degenerated into a series of annoying billings and cooings.

Thoroughly bland, and thoroughly worthless.

Andy Gill

THE RITCHIE FAMILY
Life Is Music (Polydor)

A TRIO of high-stepping foxes in cheap couture and silky fur, maquillage and coiffure by Carita of Paris, France, the Ritchie Family — Cheryl Mason Jacks, Cassandra Ann Wooten and Gwendolyn Oliver — smoulder obligingly for the ground-glass sphere, their bronzed flesh gleaming (though through exertion or artifice it's hard to tell), their talons glossy with the blood of their victims.

The Ritchie Family are the namesake and brainchild of producer Ritchie Rome who, along with the immortal team of Motali, Belolo and Hurtt, is responsible for the six lengthy disasters herein.

Just three tracks each side, including "Long Distance Romance" which boasts an unintentionally hilarious exchange between the chicklets and their absent sexual trophies as well as "Liberty", the token detente-don't-mean-we're-defeated debacle.

This is a fast-moving record, for all its sin. It made me move out of the room as fast as possible, and the girls themselves sound like they're just aching for it to be over. The voices are ridiculously muted by the android orchestration, oddly out of synch — which is weird considering that professionalism is the one thing this album doesn't lack.

The music is superfluous; the object of this exercise is the execution (public), the style, the nuances which make their point with as much subtlety as a steamhammer.

The Ritchie Family are not so much singers as clothes horses — they change their raiment three times on the album cover alone — oozing beautifully out of their collective dresses like black honey.

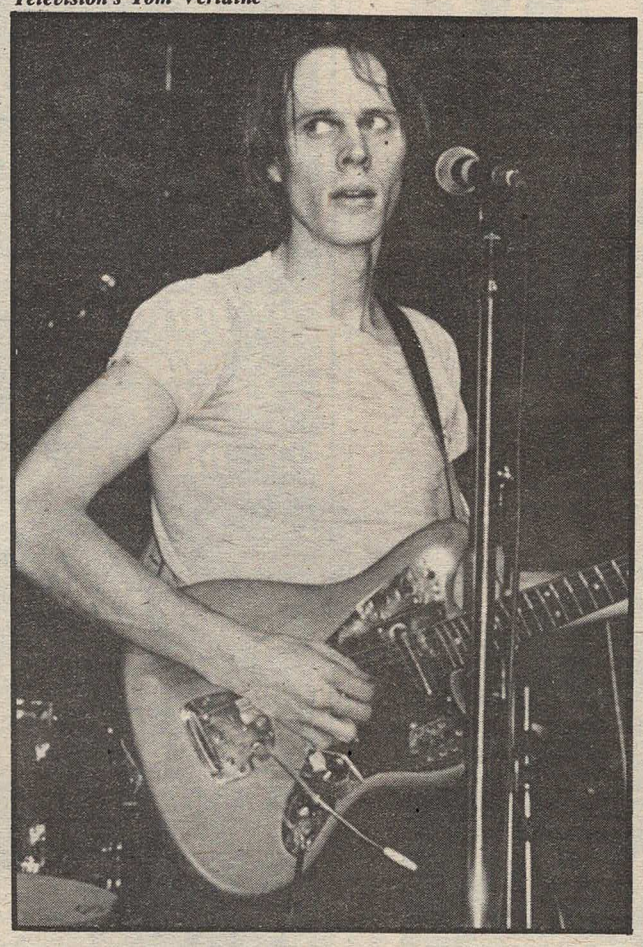
But someone really should get them under the Trades Description Act; the *sheer* volume of *skin* displayed leads one to anticipate at least a little heavy breathing, whereas this must surely be the most sexlessly sanitary product ever committed to vinyl.

Shaving your legs is more thrilling.

Julie Burchill

On Second Thoughts . . .

Television's Tom Verlaine



THE ONLY thing binding the following five albums together is that they were considered either important or interesting enough to be reviewed on import some months back.

As a service to readers who perhaps made a mental note but preferred to wait for English release this column aims to refer to the original opinion of the reviewer and includes reassessment. So, in no particular order of merit or preference . . .

TELEVISION:
Marquee Moon (Elektra)
(Reviewed 5-2-77 Nick Kent.)

"IT IS a record for everyone who boasts a taste for a new exciting music expertly executed, finely in tune, sublimely arranged with a whole new slant on dynamics, chord structures centred around a totally invigorating passionate application to the vision of centre-pin master mind Tom Verlaine."

Nothing to add except that some of the takes produced by Blue Oyster Cult's Allen Lanier are better than their brothers on "Marquee Moon" which is itself unreservedly recommended.

Kent quoth that "This is Elektra's best record since . . . 'Strange Days'." Well, since "L. A. Woman" anyhow.

KALEIDOSCOPE
When Scopes Collide (Island)

(Reviewed by David Hepworth.)

KALEIDOSCOPE ARE perhaps the epitome of the American cult band. Their first two albums, "Side Trips" and "Beacon From Mars", change hands at fabulous prices and emotional *Zig Zag* readers chain themselves to the CBS building in Soho Square demanding their re-release.

Apparently a Kaleidoscope concert was always something of an event and it's quite possible that the band's finest hour equated with that early inception. A reunion on Michael Nesmith's Pacific Arts Label hardly threatens to alter an atmosphere of idiosyncratic exploration that pervades their music.

"Their music was, and remains, a strange, exotic hybrid born of a hotch-potch of styles and influences . . . from the showbiz jazz of Cab Calloway through traditional U.S. folk music to the involved complexities of Middle Eastern forms."

Their career was excellently chronicled by *Zig Zag* last year. Reference points for new listeners are the subsequent adventures of lap steel guitarist David Lindley and Jackson Browne and two solo albums from Chris Darrow.

Utilising thirty (at least) different instruments, "When Scopes Collide" is as peculiar and inspired as Kaleidoscope ever were, though without the sense of the pioneering spirit that characterised "Beacon From Mars". Hear before you leap.

STEVE YOUNG:
Renegade Picker (R.C.A.)
Reviewed by David Hepworth.)

STEVE YOUNG is the current white hope in the trendy C & W league; youthful, riding the Jerry Jeff Walker, Tompall Glaser, Willie Nelson outlaw train to Nasville superstardom at the drop of a stetson.

Our reviewer said "Renegade Picker" is contemporary country exemplified, warts and all". He liked it. I don't. Too many warts.

Without the unassuming vision of Guy Clark but with many of the annoying lapses into toughened up schmaltz of Waylon Jennings, Young is a minor talent.

The tedium is relieved by Mac Gayden's slide and not much else. It's a matter of opinion (and this isn't my patch anyway) but I wouldn't have bought this on import and certainly not now. Ten gallons of nothing.

GLENN PHILLIPS:
Lost At Sea (Virgin)
(Reviewed 10-7-76 John Tobler)

FOR WHAT it's worth Glenn Phillips is Lowell George's fave guitar player.

"Lost At Sea" was originally available through his own Lone Star label, distributed from Atlanta, GA., and cut at home.

A worthy album, quirky, inventive, bold enough to play out an instrumental style with taste. Hence, ". . . he uses a battery of effects, most of which have been heard before, but never all together, and never generating such unbroken interest."

Phillips has been compared to Mike Oldfield and if six million people aren't wrong that isn't the kiss of death it appears. Yes, it is pleasant, different and unassuming but I don't find it rivetting listening.

TOM PETTY AND THE HEARTBREAKERS:
Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers (Shelter Island.)
(Reviewed 1-1-77 Max Bell)

MY INITIAL feelings on Petty's debut were mixed. I've since modified an undecided view — that the highlights outweigh the filling.

A limited edition bootleg, live in NYC, proves my point that the Heartbreakers rock out in a manner which will make Mr. P. a star before long.

He does a great version of Chuck's classic "Jaguar And Thunderbird" and rushes the Fender changes with the best of them.

Literate, intelligent, something to say and with a delivery that cuts the rock'n'roll ice so convincingly that he reveals the deficiencies of most of our new bands' startling lack of professionalism — a term in danger of becoming a dirty word.

Au Recherche du Tom Petty in one mainly immaculate volume.

Max Bell

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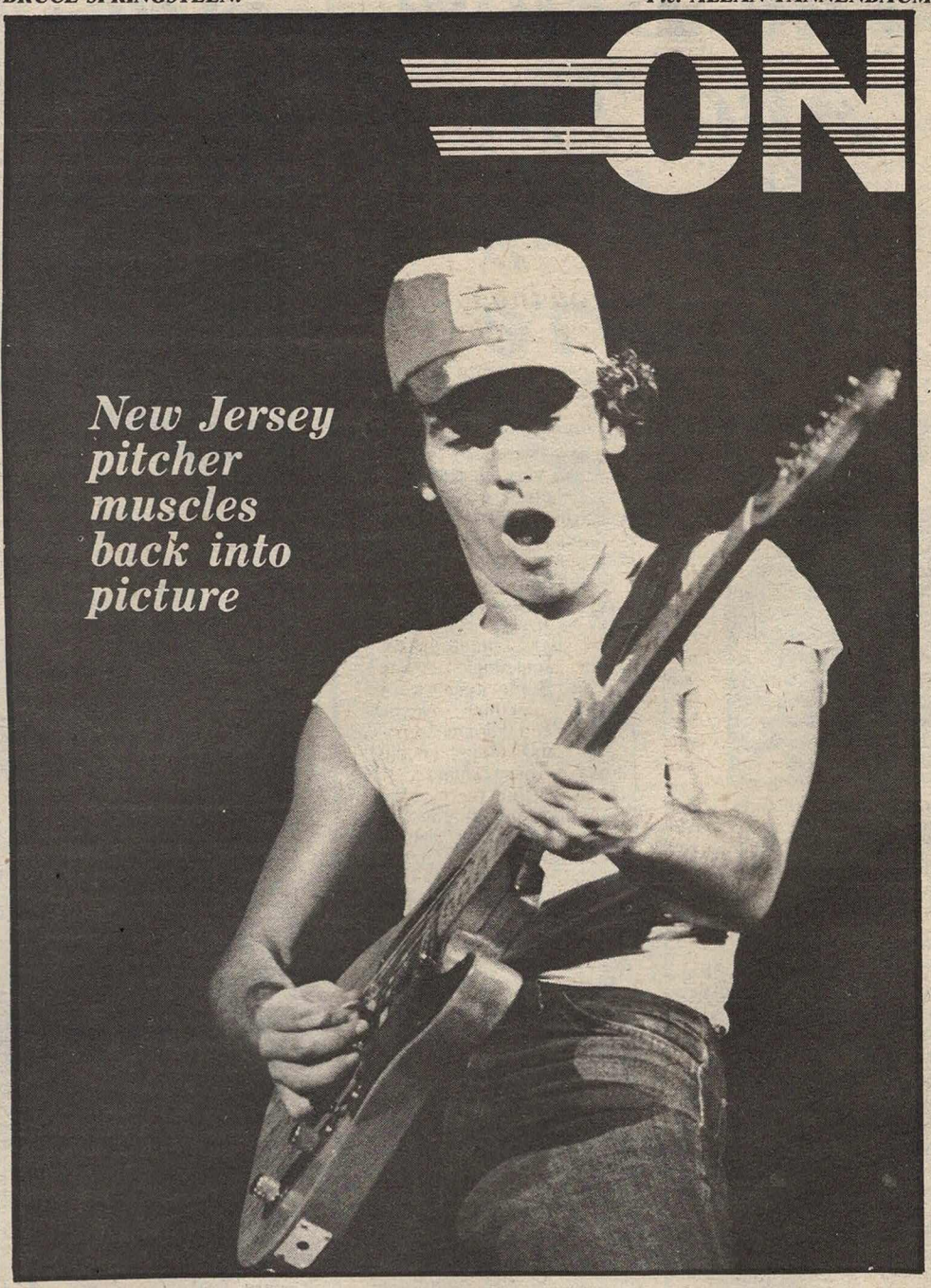
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN: Pic: ALLAN TANNENBAUM

ON

New Jersey pitcher muscles back into picture



Bruce Springsteen
BOSTON

NONSENSE SEEMS to surround Bruce Springsteen like the fog at Tenerife airport.

Just the other week in this very journal there was talk of how the unfortunate Springsteen, one of the few bona fide heavyweight rock'n'rollers to emerge this decade, had categorically "blown it" at Hammersmith Odeon back in late '75 — which isn't entirely correct.

Okay, so Springsteen himself thought the show his worst ever, and he picked up a pasting from the *NME* — but the critical disapproval was by no means unanimous. Judging by a performance I'd seen Springsteen turn in at a college in Santa Barbara, California a few weeks before his British debut, the London gig was hardly his best, but "blowing it" is a bit strong — and even now I'll bump into folk, even famous folk like Peter Gabriel, who were stone knocked out by "the future of rock'n'roll" at Hammersmith.

From the same piece in *NME* of a couple of weeks back, there was also mention of how Bruce was playing a selection of new songs on his then current US tour. Well, maybe I've got it wrong (but I did double check, as I'm not 100 per cent conversant with the collected works of the man), but when I recently saw him at the first of a four night finale to the tour in Boston, Massachusetts at that splendid city's Music Hall, there wasn't one new song in the set. Appa-

NEXT WEEK IN NME, Paul Morley reports from Munich on Sunday's Great Easter Rock & Blues Express festival, which featured the world debut of the new **SMALL FACES,** the first gig by **DR FEELGOOD** after the departure of guitar king Wilko Johnson, **JOHN MAYALL'S** latest unit, and the, er, relentless **STATUS QUO** at the top of the bill.

The Feelgood's set was pretty strange, with the remaining trio of Lee, Sparko and Figure augmented by a scared-looking Henry McCullough (currently one of Roy Harper's Black Sheep) on guitar and Tim Hinkley on keyboards. Though they played their usual, predominantly Wilko-penned set, it was much more laid-back. They went down OK — but by the time they do their next gig at the start of next month's UK tour they'll have Wilko's permanent replacement drafted.

The Small Faces were greeted with joy by the 5,000 audience, and justified the welcome with a 50/50 oldies/newies set featuring P. P. Arnold (swoon) as a permanent fixture. Rick Wills proved a fine bassist, Steve Marriott was cheeky, funny, very Cockney, on both guitar and vocals, an excellent "Watcha Gonna Do 'Bout It" was "even better than The Pistols", and the band's pre-gig nerves disappeared during an excellent set.

Status Quo did their Status Quo thing in triumph, healthy John Mayall showed off his new quartet, and Harry Chapin managed to score a good reception despite going on between The Small Faces and Quo.

Full report next week, OK?

SMALL FACES: "Jeez, we would have to make our comeback with that lot of yobbos!" (L-R: STEVE MARRIOTT, RICK WILLS, KENNY JONES, IAN MacLAGAN)
Pic: ADRIAN BOOT

THE TOWN

STEVE CLARKE has been catching up on last year's next big thing — or was it the year before's? — and discovering the harrowing wit of THE TUBES. Put 'em together, and what you got?

FUTURE SHOCK

rently this is because Springsteen is scared shitless of bootleggers getting them out before he's had a chance to release them legally (see also Thrills).

Apart from the inclusion of the Animals' "It's My Life", which apparently has already appeared on Springsteen bootlegs, his material was remarkably similar to that which he laid on the London audience in '75. In fact the only real differences between Springsteen onstage early '77 and late '75 are that he's shaved off his beard, he's changed his presentation, now working much more with his guitar as a prop, even coming on with a few Wilko Johnson poses, and he's introduced a horn section for a few numbers.

Otherwise it's the same Springsteen who appeared here in '75 — apart from the quality of it all, which, on this occasion was dangerously low. Not that it seemed to bother the audience. From the moment Springsteen hit the stage, clad in street clothes (what else?) — innocuous jeans, too small black jacket and matching waistcoat which could be the remnants of a suit his parents gave him when he was a kid — they went berserk in the nicest possible way.

The predominantly male audience, bereft of any selfconscious or fake machismo, responded to their hero with genuine cameraderie. There was no holy reverence or going through the motions of getting off on someone just 'cause you've spent however many bucks, just a good night's rock-'n'roll.

So why didn't I enjoy it? Because the longer it went on the more alienated, and therefore depressed, I felt. CBS later informed me that Bruce himself thought the gig was lousy and that the next night's concert was one of his best ever. Now where have you heard that before?

Certainly, there was nothing you could single out and say, "This is why it isn't working." But something was sorely amiss and, hard as Springsteen worked, even great songs like the heroic "Thunder Road" and that fine piece of buoyant funk, "Tenth Avenue Freeze-Out" and lots of other great Springsteen punk anthems, failed to connect. And that's saying a lot, since much of Springsteen's music is celebratory, and live it should really move you.

As a performer Springsteen seemed to lack the burning confidence he had that night I saw him on the West Coast, and to compensate was trying too hard. His fooling around with horn player Clarence Clemons, as ever the epitome of the jive talking amiable hip spade, was all too predictable. And the devices he used to get the audience off as the show reached what should have been its climax (there were no high and lows), with a rock'n'roll encore of Gary 'US' Bonds' "A Quarter To Three" and "You Can't Sit Down", were too cliched by half.

Throughout, none of the musicians played badly, but there was rarely any pizzaz — and while Clemons' execution of King Curtis type riffs is fine, he doesn't have enough imagination to cut it when he solos.

I don't know. The kids got off on it. I still like playing my Springsteen records, but I reckon the guy is an erratic performer. Just put it down to the weather. Anyway, let's hear for Bruce for playing small halls — in New York he avoided Madison Square Gardens and did six nights at the 3,000 seater Palladium.

Steve Clarke

The Tubes
LOS ANGELES

NOTHING — THAT'S right, nothing — can prepare you for The Tubes.

God, I've seen a few rock bands in my time, but I've never seen anything like The Tubes. In an hour or so they totally and utterly ravish your senses and send your brain a-reelin' with a series of skits so brilliantly conceived and executed, so savagely satirical — *so on the mark* — they had me delighted, shocked, horrified, feeling horny, laughing deep inside, etc, etc. . .

When it comes to rock'n'roll satire (and a whole lot more) The Tubes leave no stone unturned. Or if they do, it's not worth turning.

And that's only half the story.

Trying to describe The Tubes to you, dear reader, is like trying to tell an alien what our world is like. So they play conventional rock instruments, stand on a stage and sing their songs — but that's like saying the Beatles were a pop group. An American rock writer once wrote that The Tubes were midway between Steely Dan and the Bonzos. I know what he meant, but hang on . . .

There's so much going on at a Tubes show — or rather extravaganza — that it's impossible to take it all in. Dotted at various points on and around the stage at Los Angeles' Whiskey A-Go-Go are maybe half a dozen video screens which, during the course of The Tubes' show, bombard your eyes with all kinds of things. That's if you get the chance to look at them, 'cause people, especially people The Tubes have in their band, are more interesting to watch than something reproduced on a smallish screen.

It's difficult to say how many are in The Tubes. Okay, there's a drummer, bassist, a synthesizer player so inventive he'd have Leonardo Da Vinci hard-pressed *(Leonardo Da Who?!! Slow down there, Steve — Ed.)*, a percussionist, a guitarist, a couple of vocalists, a score of dancers . . .

And there's Fee Waybill (nee Cranson), who throughout the course of the evening assumes numerous personae.

Two years and two A&M albums ago, The Tubes came out of the San Francisco Bay area — where they'd spent three years working up their act in local clubs — and carved their cult status legend with the then highpoint of their act, "White Punks On Dope". It still makes a great set closer.

Wearing 12-inch stack heels and a silver suit exposing his chest, his hair a mess, Waybill sends up the entire English rock star establishment, be it Rod Stewart, Elton John, Gary Glitter or, say, Chris Squire — and, of course, Jagger. He also has a go at the Guitar Hero syndrome and the cliched devices employed to get people off at a vast majority of rock concerts.

His English accent is perfect — a drug crazed number. And his talk of imminent solo albums is right on the bone.

One of Waybill's latest personae is one Johnny Bugger, backed by his band The Shits. As with everything The Tubes do, the attention to detail is exemplary and Bugger not only appears in the requisite leather jacket and mangled jeans, but he even has the crotch tied together with safety pins. Bugger leers menacingly at the audience, spitting at the crowd, and at one point, with frightening conviction, he seizes a member of the audience (a plant) and proceeds to get obnoxious with him.

The pastiche is 100 per cent accurate, and the parody wicked.

At other points during the show The Tubes have a go (and make no mistake, The Tubes do more than poke fun at the madness that goes on around us) at disco, smoking, such crass American institutions as their TV quiz shows, and much more besides.

There's also a very heavy (and I mean hea-vy) sado-masochism routine. Again it could be the real thing, which, incidentally, is probably going on just a few blocks away. The song's called "Mondo Bondage".

Throughout, the choreography is nothing less than brilliant, as good as anything you'd see in vaudeville shows in London's West End or on Broadway. Hitherto, English bands have always had the last say in rock humour. The Tubes have changed all that, taking it further than anyone could imagine.

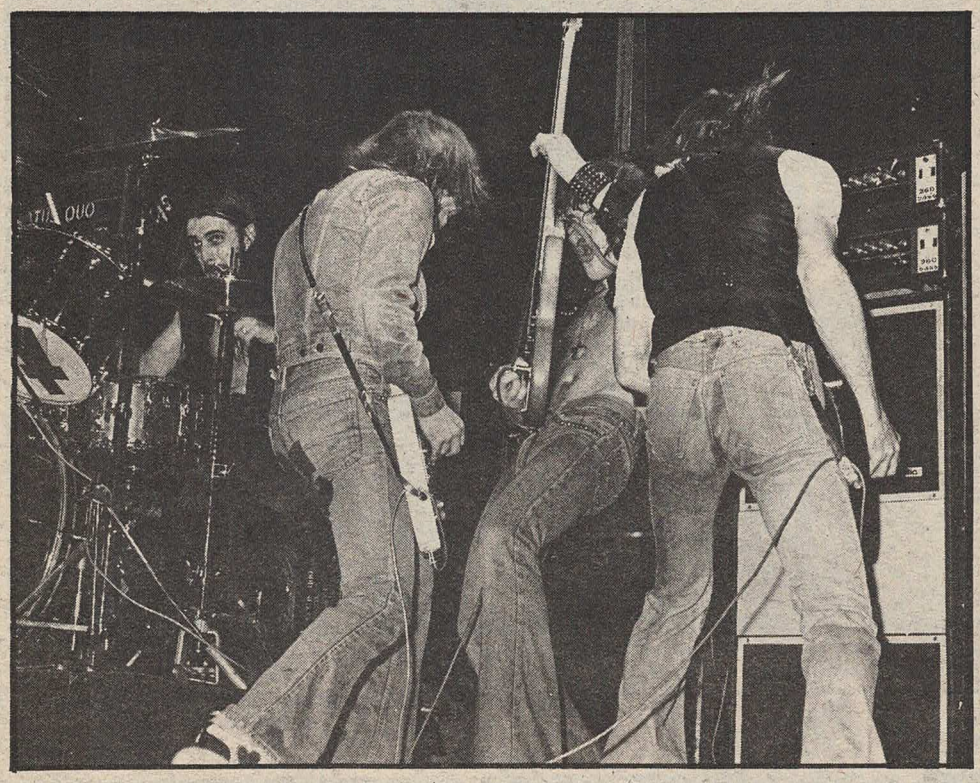
Moreover, The Tubes are all excellent musicians, playing with a frightening on-the-brink metallic edge and cogency.

The Tubes, whatever the expense, must come to Britain immediately. I'm convinced British audiences would get off on them even more than their American contemporaries.

Steve Clarke

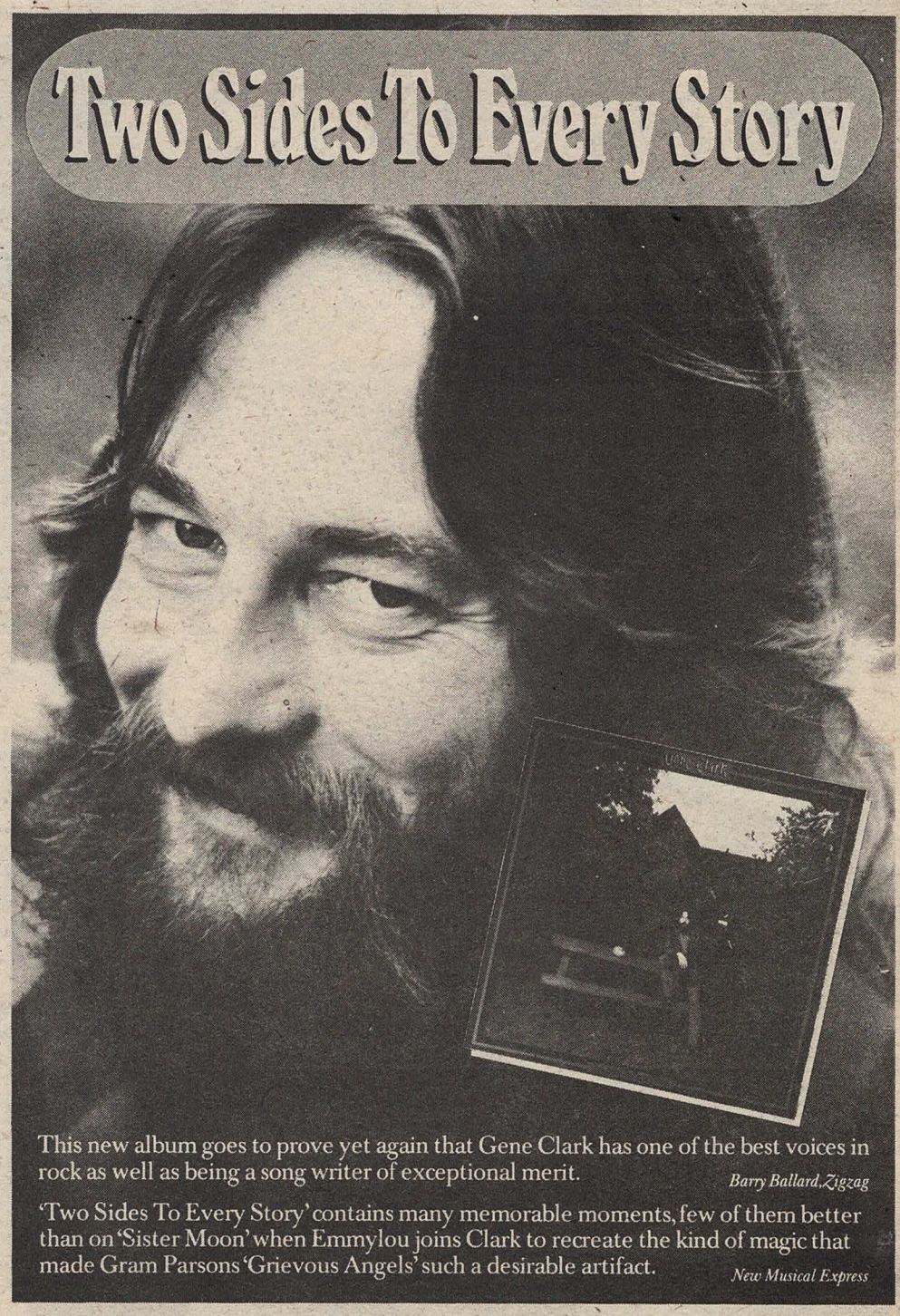
WAYBILL: "Turn the page — before it's too late!" Pic: LFI

QUO fight off amplifiers (L-R: COGHLAN, PARFITT, LANCASTER, ROSSI)



STATUS QUO, SMALL FACES debut, FEELGOODS without Wilko.

Big Munich show report in next week's NME



This new album goes to prove yet again that Gene Clark has one of the best voices in rock as well as being a song writer of exceptional merit. *Barry Ballard, Zigzag*

'Two Sides To Every Story' contains many memorable moments, few of them better than on 'Sister Moon' when Emmylou joins Clark to recreate the kind of magic that made Gram Parsons 'Grievous Angels' such a desirable artifact. *New Musical Express*

YOU WILL LOVE THIS BAND

(and that's an order)

The Jam

LEEDS POLYTECHNIC

RICK BUCKLER hangs tough behind his kit, cool as a spring breeze, snapping out a viciously precise beat with contemptuous ease. The kind of drummer that makes me want to up and trade my guitar for a drum kit IMMEDIATELY! If Jimmy Dean had been a drummer he would've played like Rick Buckler.

Paul Weller plays his guitar real neat, his right hand coming down over the strings in a tense, clipped fluttering motion like a moth caught in a strobe beam, the chords chasing each other out into the hall, fighting for dancing room (I think I'll keep my guitar after all).

Paul also handles the lead vocals, but I'm right up front with the dancers, jumping around like a demented wallaby,so the lyrics go right over my head. I'm digging this on an entirely different level; down in the pits, where Basic Instincts and Natural Rhythm reign untouchable . . .AND I AM HAVIN' A BALL!! His voice sounds okay, though.

Bruce Foxton is so close to me I could play his bass for him, but he doesn't see me. I don't think he sees anything at all. He hops and pogos around as though acutely aware of each limb as he moves. Is this what they call "awkward grace"? Probably, yes. He mouths the lyrics silently — I presume — his eyes seem to stare in disbelief at his actions, almost as though they don't belong to him, reflecting the desperate tension that fuses the band together. I stop dancing for a while, quite fascinated.

God knows what's happened to The Stranglers. They're supposed to be topping the bill, but word had it they ain't turned up yet, so who cares already? These boys have already played longer than they should've, and they've come back for an encore. Of course, by this time I am seriously out of control, paralysed from neck up. End of gig.

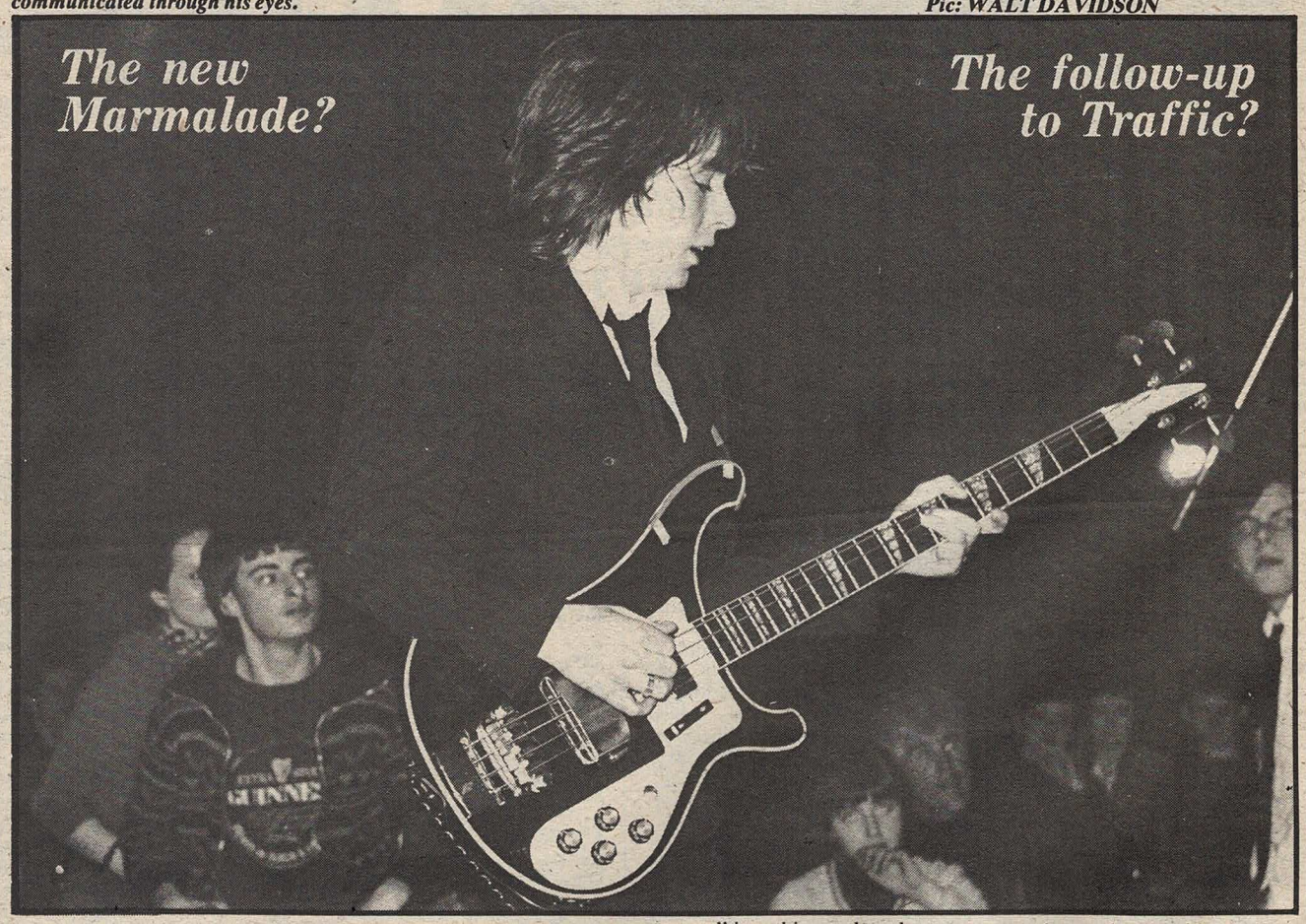
There is something different about The Jam, and I'm not sure what it is: something more than uniform dress — black suits, white shirts, etc — perhaps it's down to 'soul' or something like that. I said I'm not sure, but give me time.

After the gig somebody told me that they were being touted as a '60s revivalist band. Forget it. That is, like err, bullshit, man. You might just as well call The Stones a blues band. Sure, they use the mid-60' 'mod sound' as a powerbase, of sorts, but from there it's 10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1-zero, blast off, instant '70s modism, Desperate Tension, adrenalin rush guaranteed, and all like that.

Thrill to The Jam, it's such fun.

John Hamblett

BRUCE FOXTON of THE JAM, one of the most compelling sights currently available in rock — his every thought seems to be communicated through his eyes. *Pic: WALT DAVIDSON*



Daevid Allen

ICA, LONDON

THE STORY SO FAR: Daevid Allen, ex-Beat poet and mate of William Burroughs, subsequently advance-guard hippy, acid head, and guiding light of the sadly defunct Gong, has been hiding out in the Spanish moutains meditating (having by now foresworn chemical and organic stimulants) and writing the definitive mythology / philosophy of the planet Gong around the adventure thereon and elsewhere of the autobiographical Zero the Hero.

Still "spiritually in that world", his earthly body has come over to London to deliver a *lecture* on Gong — the planet, the philosophy, the band and the forthcoming book — at the ICA, recently the site of the infamous and decidedly more mundane Genesis P. Orridge Tampax "art" show. The nature of Allen's work being what it is, he was still writing the lecture in Finsbury Park at the time it was due to start.

Before finally beginning some 45 minutes later, Allen personally ensured the presence of latecomers (the gig was well sold out) by bringing them all on the stage.

By way of introduction, Allen believes "the laws of the Universe are the laws of music", and the Gong myths, preserved for posterity on vinyl in the Virgin "Flying Teapot" trilogy, are merely an amusing allegory of the rock and roll Aquarian Age. Zero the Hero, the optimistic but ordinary man, gets to meet the switch doctors, psychedelic aliens walking this earth, who turn him on to the Music of the Spheres and the Planet Gong, where live the Octave Doctors — Pot Head Pixies who give order and light to the universe. Zero, though, never quite reaches the stage of cosmic enlightenment; from which eternal failure he has formulated the "to blow it is to know it" philosophy.

Dippy concepts, huh? Yeah . . . and the slides and tapes tonight were shaky and unsynchronised; Allen kept fumbling nervously with his notes and losing his thread, and he was eventually forced to ditch half the lecture through lack of time . . . and it still went on for hours.

So this was not for the cynical and humourless. Neither would it have been enjoyed by those of us whose idea of fun is posing as a Weimar vampire in violet eyeshadow.

Nevertheless the packed house, passing "jays" and chillums like it was already legal, clearly found this far more entertaining, if not to say more "real" and "relevant", than the contemporary alternatives. Partly stoned rap, hippy sermon on the mount, stream of anecdote, acid manifesto, Australian comic turn, it held them all transfixed for its duration.

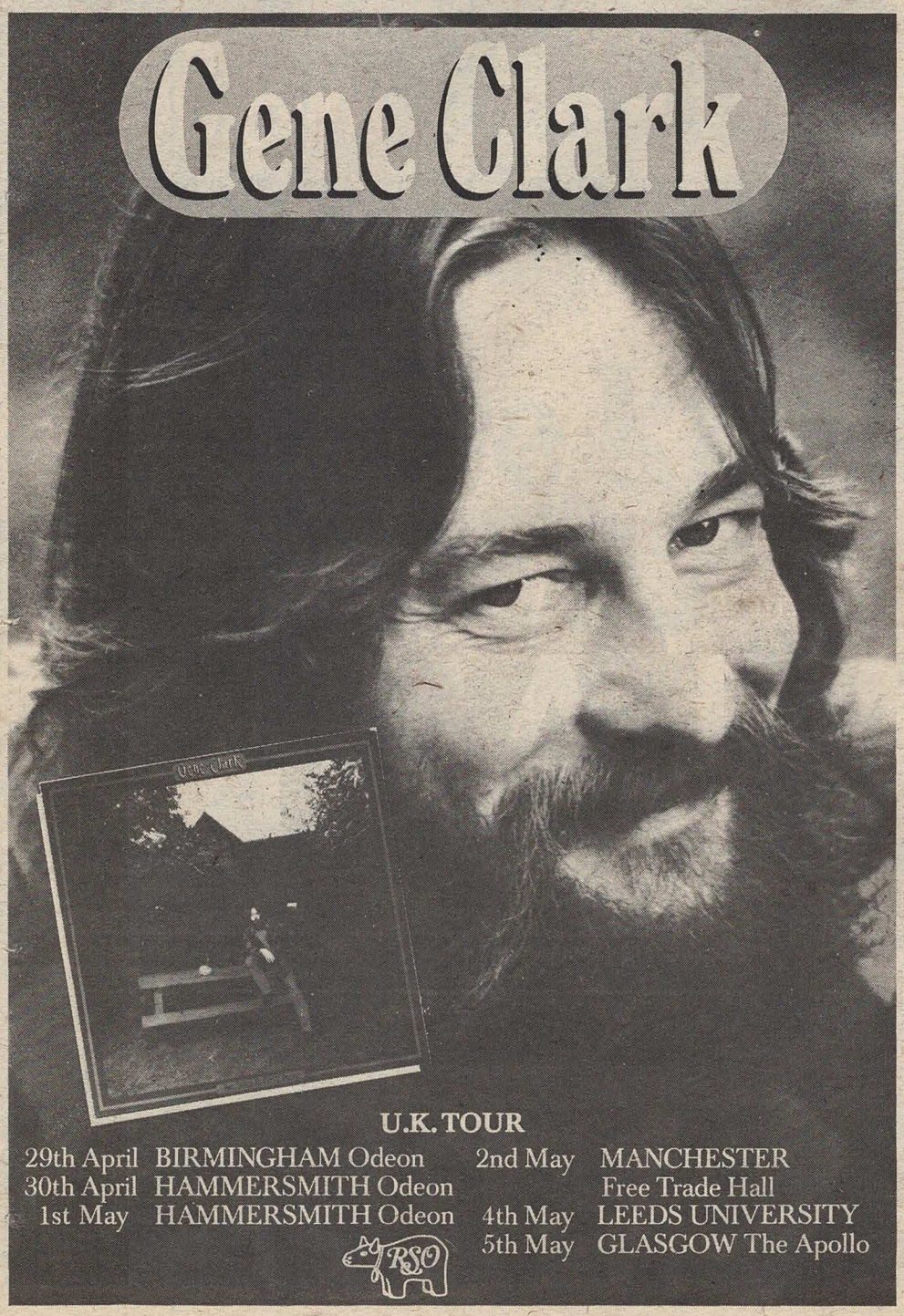
It could certainly have been better structured, but what was lost in slickness was gained in sponaneity. Tarot, I-Ching, Gurdjieff, sacred geometry, advanced musical theory, ley lines, life on the road, ancient astronomy and all the other bedsit obsessions of the late '60s were synthesised into something rather special..

The first half was devoted to general background and miscellany, including a priceless 1966 Jack de Manio Breakfast Show interview with the emerging Soft Machine — Jack: "How old are you all?" Kevin Ayers: Together? About 126".

The second half was a rambling synopsis of the book, which will feature a storyline based loosely on Allen's experiences with Gong.

Hopefully the show helped him to put his thoughts in order, and he will get the book and the projected Pot Head Pixie Club, with annual Tea Parties in Hyde Park, together. Anyway it was fun.

Jonathan Barnett



"Hey, Steve, how come the spotlight's on you when it's a review of me?" — " 'Cause I'm the only star in the pic, of course. Just tuck your pants in and keep playing . . ."

ATLANTA

John Hartford
LSE

THIS WAS an intrepid booking by the Social Sec, because Hartford is best known in this country as the writer of "Gentle On My Mind", which has been MoR'd out of existence (it doesn't sound at all like Glen Campbell when its author sings it, and it's really not a typical Hartford composition anyway).

Nevertheless, those fortunate enough to watch Hartford's astonishing one man band show were well satisfied, unlike the Radio One *In Concert* crowd, who had completely failed to grasp what Hartford was doing a couple of nights before.

The most novel aspect of the performance was the miked-up piece of plywood on which Hartford produces percussive noises by dancing, at the same time as singing and playing either fiddle, banjo or guitar. Then there's his large repertoire of mouth noises, which culminate in a version of "Duelling Cheeks" at the end of "Trying To Do Something To Get Your Attention".

After twelve albums over the last ten years or so, there's a large number of available songs, although Hartford concentrated on his latest two LPs, "Mark Twang" and "Nobody Knows What You Do". "Let Him Roll On Mama" and "Skippin' In The Mississippi Dew" demonstrated Hartford's obsession with river boats, while much of the rest of the set consisted of his humorous songs, like "Don't Leave Your Records In The Sun", "The Washing Machine", "Granny Won't You Smoke Some Marijuana?" and "Two Hits And The Joint Turned Brown", which the audience appeared to understand to a man.

The more serious highlight of the set was a fine version of "Nobody Eats At Linebaughs Any More", a song which lamented the imminent closure of the Grand Ol' Opry, but the majority of his material was dominated by the sort of wry humour demonstrated in "A Ballad Of Existence", a song in which A meets B at a place where C's granny, who once was in hospital with D, just missed running over E, who had just seen a picture of F, whose dog's name was the same as G . . . and so on.

The thought of going to a gig to see an unaccompanied fiddle player would be an anathema in any other circumstances, but John Hartford provided entertainment and enjoyment of a unique type.

FLASHES

SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY & THE ASBURY JUKES have received a most bountiful quota of superlative-flecked media ravings since they first set foot on these shores at the beginning of March, gigging as guest star support to Graham Parker & The Rumour.

The bash last Wednesday down at the Rainbow was their special prestigious bill-topping exeunt, earned apparently through consistent thumbs-up verdicts from the Parker hordes . . . and they were so gosh-darned exhilarating that at least some small token of a mention here to attest to their triumph is well in order.

A surprisingly large turn-out greeted the band with a mighty roar of united approval as the ten-piece ensemble took the stage, seizing the moment to bottle it all out as soon as the first note was struck, and continuing to work out at a vivaciously infectious pitch of delirious excitement. There was never a hint of 'slack' in the presentation and energy level — everything was drawn tight as a bow-string as the band lunged through choice selections from their two albums, numbers like "This Time It's For Real", "When You Dance" and Springsteen's "The Fever" being particularly memorable.

An added ingredient — a four-song mini-set from **Ronnie Spector** — also made an infecting impression, the delicious Mrs S. pitching her vocals loud and clear on "Baby I Love You", "Walking In The Rain", "Be My Baby" and a new song, Billy Joel's "Say Goodbye To Hollywood", and happily banishing all unfortunate memories (for me, anyway) of her previous London gig at Bibas over two years ago.

Other special guests were A. Jukes producer / mentor / Springsteen sideman Steve Van Zandt, who played guitar and directed the choruses for the Ronnie Spector segment, and one G. Parker, who joined the band for the final encore.

These added attractions, though pleasant to witness, were little more than a touch of stray icing on the cake, really. This was most definitely The Asbury Jukes' gig, and their drive and sheer high-energy professionalism will most surely be missed. A hasty return can scarcely be too soon.

Oh, and by the way, the sound they achieved at the Rainbow was easily the best I've heard since that venue reopened. Other groups take note.

Nick Kent

***RONNIE SPECTOR** onstage at the Rainbow last Wednesday. Spector appeared in a state of defiant undress that was genuinely shocking, her sheer physical pride serving as a wordless condemnation of the sort of voyeuristic sexism which ran so grossly rampant in last week's NME.*
(This has been a Caption With A Conscience).

Bicycle Thieves
MANCHESTER

THE *NEW MANCHESTER Review* is a local what's on / review / irrelevant views magazine which lacks sparkle, put together by a bunch of people who, in their continuing efforts to act as some sort of catalyst for Manchester middle-brow entertainment, have bagged the area's finest musical venue, the Band On The Wall, for Monday night promotions featuring local bands, novelty / speciality acts and suitable esoteric disco sounds.

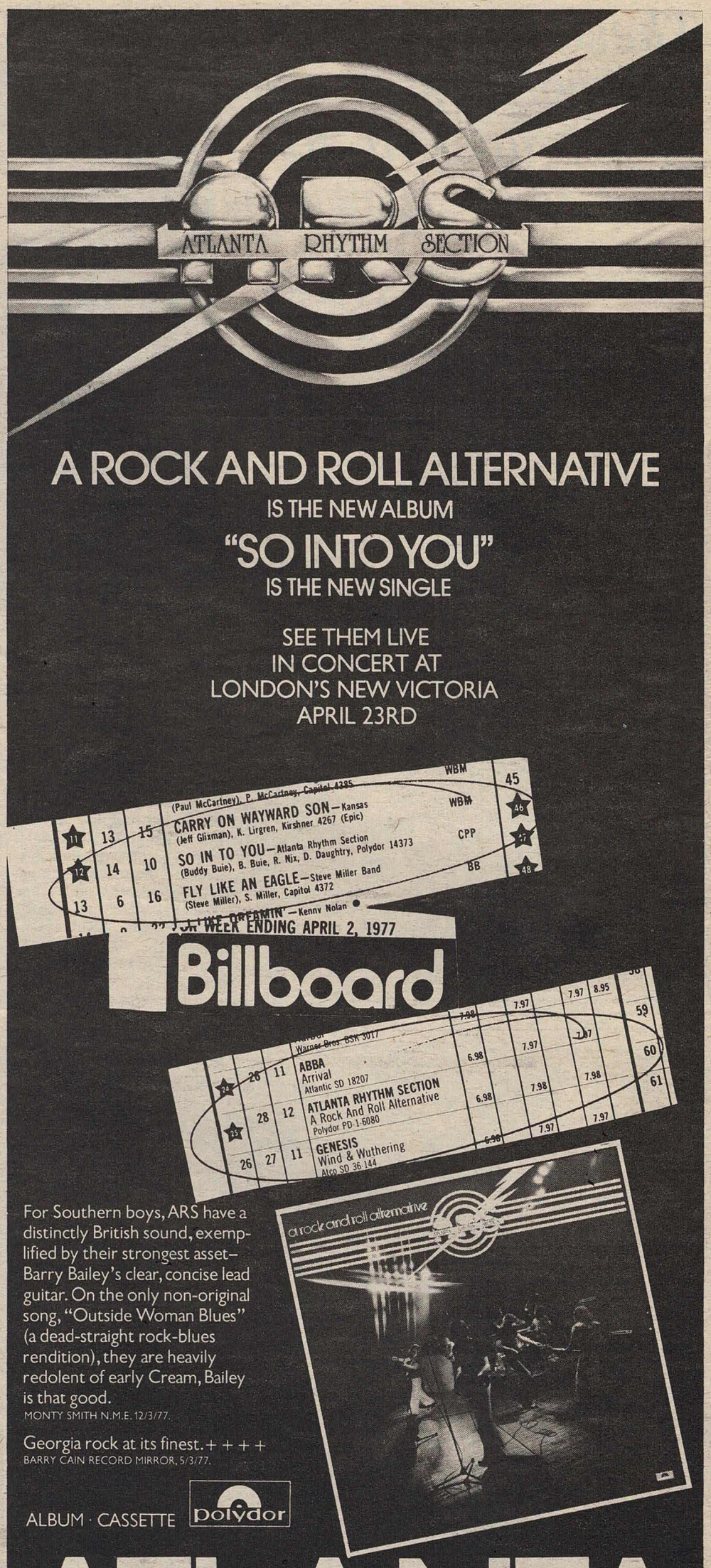
Tonight it's Mark Stone on freeform flamenco guitar and Bicycle Thieves, a band who just need streamlining to fulfill high potential. Mark Stone's first set was marred by cold hands and nervousness, but his second allotted 15 minutes was a tireless swirl of pristine flurries; percussive, intense and delightfully entertaining.

Manchester is well known for producing 'tasty', ultra-competent, deadly boring rock bands (Sad Cafe and Harpoon spring to mind), and during their first set that's how the Thieves hit me. Secure and confident, especially lead guitarist Richard Wright, who got a little too fussy with his licks — but, y'know, um, what's the point?

But for the second set the Thieves were augmented For The First Time In Public by sax and trumpet, and they were a different band. The songs were punchy, solid and swinging, for the most part lively and uncomplicated rock'n'roll. The brassmen, playing expert charts arranged by Wright, merged seamlessly with the band, toughening them considerably and supplying drive and tension. R&B to the first set's country.

The songs need to be a lot rougher round the edges; vocally it's a lot too friendly; and I can't understand the use of the second vocalist and tambourinist. But this band could get together a really good ten-song, 45-minute- up-front, danceable rock'n'roll set, using the brass and chopping out most of the lengthy instrumental parts. Perhaps intensive listening to Parker / Springsteen albums would help — certainly there's a firm basis to work from.

Paul Morley


ATLANTA RHYTHM SECTION
A ROCK AND ROLL ALTERNATIVE
IS THE NEW ALBUM
"SO INTO YOU"
IS THE NEW SINGLE
SEE THEM LIVE
IN CONCERT AT
LONDON'S NEW VICTORIA
APRIL 23RD
Billboard
WEEK ENDING APRIL 2, 1977
CARRY ON WAYWARD SON—Kansas
SO IN TO YOU—Atlanta Rhythm Section
FLY LIKE AN EAGLE—Steve Miller Band
ABBA
Arrival
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ATLANTA RHYTHM SECTION
A Rock And Roll Alternative
Polydor PD 1-6080
GENESIS
Wind & Wuthering
Atco SD 36-144
a rock and roll alternative
For Southern boys, ARS have a distinctly British sound, exemplified by their strongest asset– Barry Bailey's clear, concise lead guitar. On the only non-original song, "Outside Woman Blues" (a dead-straight rock-blues rendition), they are heavily redolent of early Cream, Bailey is that good.
MONTY SMITH N.M.E. 12/3/77.
Georgia rock at its finest.++++
BARRY CAIN RECORD MIRROR, 5/3/77.
ALBUM · CASSETTE
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ATLANTA RHYTHM SECTION

These pages wear dog collars. What does it all lead to?

Ultravox

Sheffield

MIXED FEELINGS about this one: a dynamite band built around the rather dubious talents of singer/songwriter / occasional guitarist John Foxx, Ultravox could quite easily make it *very* big or disappear from sight as rapidly as they appeared.

Opening with "Wide Boys" and "Saturday Night In The City Of The Dead", their essential strength is immediately apparent: the rhythm section of Warren Cann (drums) and Chris Cross (bass) work beautifully together, Cann's minimal kit on the receiving end of one hell of a thrashing, and Cross pushing along the most satisfying bass tone I've heard in quite a while — real deep and bouncy, like it was strung with elastic bands.

For a band which places great emphasis on the "punky" side of their image, the front-line musicians, Stevie Shears (guitar) and Billy Currie (violin / keyboards), display far greater expertise and imagination than the *de rigeur* simplicity of many bands of that genre. Shears, the stoic Wyman stoneface of the group, shows remarkable restraint and command, sending jarring, atonal phrases scattering across the songs.

Influences — or, more correctly, spurts of musical *deja vu* — flash through their set constantly. Currie's violin, presumably the ol' Velvets emulation here again, lends the ponderous "I Want To Be A Machine" an air uncannily reminiscent of "High Tide", repeating the trick on "The Wild, The Beautiful And The Damned". Doors references abound, courtesy Currie's keyboards, and then of course there's yer early Stones, Who and Kinks, with just a pinch of Ramones for seasoning. These guys, it seems, are more throwback mods than punks.

On the debit side, their "smooth punk" image grates, neither one thing nor the other, and the absurdly mannered performance by Foxx distracts continuously. His method of announcing songs is to switch on the mock anger and raise his voice slightly: "This is called . . . THE CITY DOESN'T CARE!" Really *heavy*, eh? Besides this, he's a barely competent singer and *lousy* mover, and also writes in platitudes.

Still, Foxx notwithstanding, they were far better than the usual Top Rank fare, and the pogoing made a welcome change from the head-shaking. As a friend remarked: "I've not seen such a genuine *enthusiasm* for a band here in a long while."

Andy Gill

"Hey, guys — where do you get the ones with all the studs in? My pet shop only does these cheap ones."(FOXX of ULTRAVOX) pic: GUS STEWART

Jazz Festival

SHAW THEATRE

THE CAMDEN Music Festival got off to a vaudeville start amid flat irons and howls of contumely and derision. With a vociferous section of the audience there to see the Clark Terry Big Band, four to the bar and no messin', there was precious little toleration for the opening set from Keith Tippett's Ark. "Rubbish!" "Gerroff! "Play some Jazz!": thus spake the arbiter elegantiarum.

All of which gives pith and moment to Chris Barber's recent comment that the average music listener, jazz, rock or classical, is basically a Max Bygraves fan. The issue at Camden was over Free Music, which has been with us now for twenty years, roughly the same time-span as Elvis, and could only pass for a newcomer in outlying areas like Ambridge.

Ark played three pieces, in between the strafing, the first two slow and atmospheric with stately trumpet fanfares, Frank Pefry's gongs and the leader's eerily trailed piano figures.

Jazz fans fighting in the streets — that's what. That's what?

The eleven-piece unit advanced the melody in layers, brass and reeds loosely staggered to chime against each other. It had a heavy, underwater rhythm of its own, with the percussionist colouring rather than motivating, and bassist Harry Miller prowling in arco.

Maybe it was the absence of a stated beat, maybe it was the emphasis on trance and texture, but in the long birdsong section — the stage phosphorescent with flutes — the public suddenly snapped.

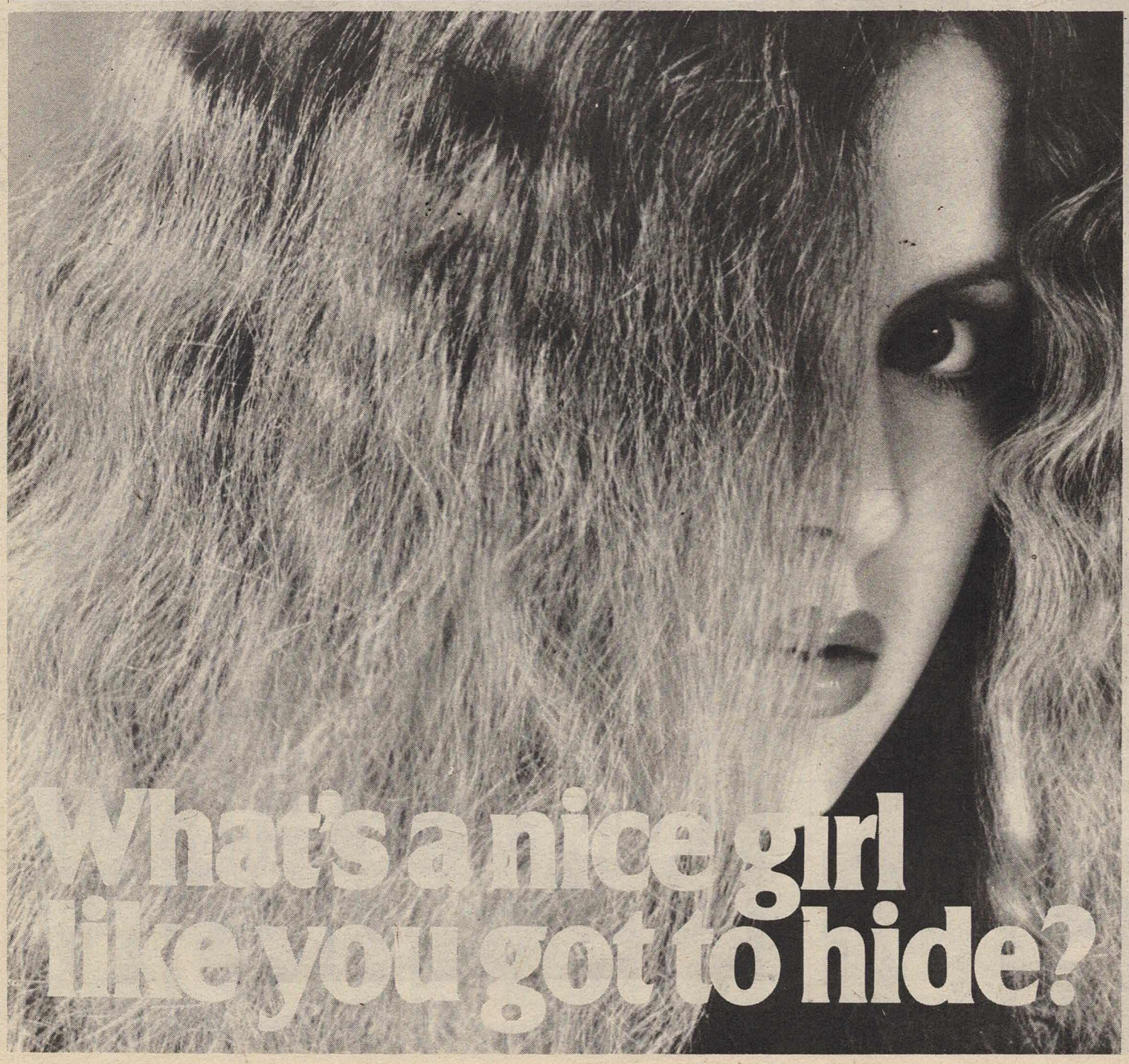
The dust-up raises a lot of questions. Were the leavers threatened or merely bored? Is Free Music, unsupported by the record companies and communications networks, doomed to remain a minority cult? How far, if at all, should the musician regard himself as an entertainer? One thing is sure — music that was played with sincerity and an open spirit was received with a closing of ranks.

By contrast, Clark Terry's band dresses up to play and emcees every note. The music was fair, always — with one notable exception — within the tradition of the tried and true. Most of the numbers came from the veteran pen of Ernie Wilkins without the bespoke approach of an Ellington or Evans, hard-wearing, off-the-peg material for average wear. Terry himself, ebullient, dare-devil, has personality to spare so that when his trumpet was on the case, the whole band sounded special. Apart from that, Walter Bishop's piano on "Take The A-Train", Chris Woods' flute on "Flute Juice", Charles Davis' baritone on "Carney" and Norris Turney's alto on "Randy" were good, professional stuff.

"Freedom — with discipline, however", announced Terry in an easy sop for the prejudiced, and out of the trumpet section came the great Richard Williams.

Woods took a good, facile freeish alto solo, descending to quotes from "It Don't Mean A Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing" — Hooray! Hooray! — then Williams cut loose. He swims in Free like a fish, unloosing the first — and only — passion of the set. His music raged and bit and soared. I'd like to think it was a gesture of solidarity.

The second night was magnificent. Guitarist Jimmy Raney, Bebop veteran, took standards and made them new. In his



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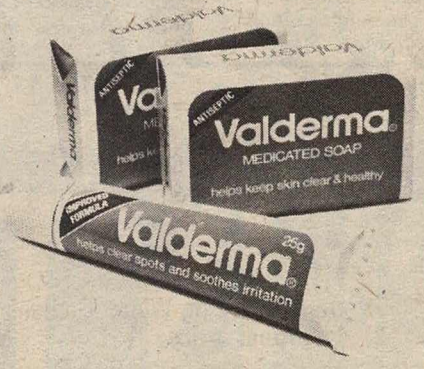

hands, the style flows like seamless silk — runs, leaps, splayed chunking chords, pecks and turns, all fit like fingers in a fist. His son Chuck, labouring under a bout a flu, has some of the components of Bebop guitar together, and formed an adequate foil for Senior in the contrapuntal sections.

Bach's Fugue came over like Konitz & Marsh, both Raneys crouched over their instruments like jockeys in the straight. The solo feature, "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes", laid melody on melody until the mind boggled. A master.

Polish pianist Adam Macowicz spins Tatumesque webs of arpeggios, stumps Stride, stirs everything, in fact, into a delirious Jarrett mixture. His technique is phenomenal, and his head is ahead of that.

The final set fell to Chris McGregor's Bluenotes. Nobody warms the place up like this lot. The television crew, trying to play Boswell to Dudu Pukwana, had their work cut out with this non-lateral phenomenon. From the off, the stocky, truculent altoist was beside himself with chops — rolling his trousers, bumping his bum, blowing a gym whistle, clopping Zulu mouth-clops, and lunging at each mike in turn with blow-torch alto.

Energy bursts from Dudu in spurts. Irrelevant to demand formal and consecutive structuring. The music is ragged, raw, swept by spasms of wild elation, and it came near to having the audience dancing in the aisles. John Marshall, depping for Louis Moholo, is a fine drummer from a different tradition, so that the bumping push of propulsion came from Johnny Dyani, who seemed to be throwing his bass from hand to hand. Unforgettable.

Brian Case

FLASHES

Pic: CHALKIE DAVIES

YOU TOO WOULD have roared with laughter if you'd caught **THE ADVERTS** huffing and puffing, unsuccessfully trying to blow the house of Dingwalls down.

Three of the band — vocalist TV Smith, drummer Laurie Driver and their guitarist Frankenstein — were exactly what's now expected of New Wave spokesmen: angry, aggressive and passionately absorbed in the crude energy of their music. In contrast, their pretty bassettist, Gaye Advert, stood sulkily to the side of the stage, exuding deliberate cool. Inadvertently she only reflected the general indifference of the audience.

Did she too wish to disassociate herself from the maniacal howling of TV, Franki's uncouth guitar whipping, and a wild eyed drummer steaming into the kit in a manner which was as comically absurd as the *Muppet Show's* deranged stickman? Of course, the front two, singer and guitarist, looked like raggy clothed urban castaways, but the noise they made was dreadful. Even when they returned to the stage after once abandoning the set, there was a continuous howl of accidental feedback, and a general musical untogetherness.

Really, it wouldn't have passed as a rehearsal, and after nine months as a group you expect more than their kind of instrumental artlessness.

Tony Stewart

Detective
HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA

BY HIS OWN admission, Michael Des Barres' old band Silverhead was supposed to be a real-life movie about an elegantly-wasted rock'n'roll band. But though the synopsis was quite interesting, Silverhead promised more than it delivered and almost immediately fell victim to its own abuse.

Detective is the name of Des Barres' new band, and even *they* haven't even got a clue about what their angle is. Immaculately suited'n'booted, Detective promises nothing and delivers even less.

After almost two years under wraps, Detective should have gotten off to a more auspicious start. Everything had been laid on for The Big Event: unlimited studio time, Andy Johns producing, the Jimmy Page Good House-Keeping Seal Of Approval, a deal with SwanSong, a large billboard overlooking Sunset Strip and a gala World Premiere (complete with red carpet and searchlights) at Hollywood's Roxy Theatre.

After drink and anything else you could shove down your throat was served, the capacity crowd of invited guests was ready to party. Pity Detective weren't. The lights went down, the curtain went up and the backing crew of Tony Kaye (assorted keyboards), Michael Monarch (guitar and Jeff Beck impersonations), Jon Hyde (drums) and Bobby Pickett (bass) kicked off aggressively to a great barrage of hoots 'n' hollers of encouragement. Everyone expected it to be a night to remember — not, as it transpired, a night to forget.

Hyde hammered his way through the Learn-To-Play-The-Drums-The-John-Bonham-Method whilst Pickett gritted his teeth and handled his bass like a bazooka. Monarch had troubles on the fretboard, and poor Tony Kaye was lost in the murky sound mix.

Des Barres then skipped on stage, posed, minced, mimed, took off his jacket, sweated, remarked "it's like a mortuary up here", took the piss, played-up to the photographers and led Detective through a pastiche of Swan-Song's house-style. None of the *Led Company*— influenced songs like "Recognition", "Detective Man", "One More Heartache", "Wild Hot Summer Nights" and "Fever" possessed anything that hasn't already been re-cycled by every derivative HM wrecking crew over the last five years.

The set dragged on and on and . . . I found it quite depressing to observe someone like Tony Kaye trapped into churning out a succession of redundant rock retreads when his proven talents could be utilised in far more rewarding pursuits.

It was most inappropriate that Detective concluded with "Good Rockin' Tonight".

Most everyone who plays The Roxy is called back for an encore. Even the waitresses.

Detective weren't.

Roy Carr

Whatever happened to MICHAEL DES BARRES?

"Who?" *Pic: JOE STEVENS*

"Me, bozo — the one in the middle with my new band — Detective.

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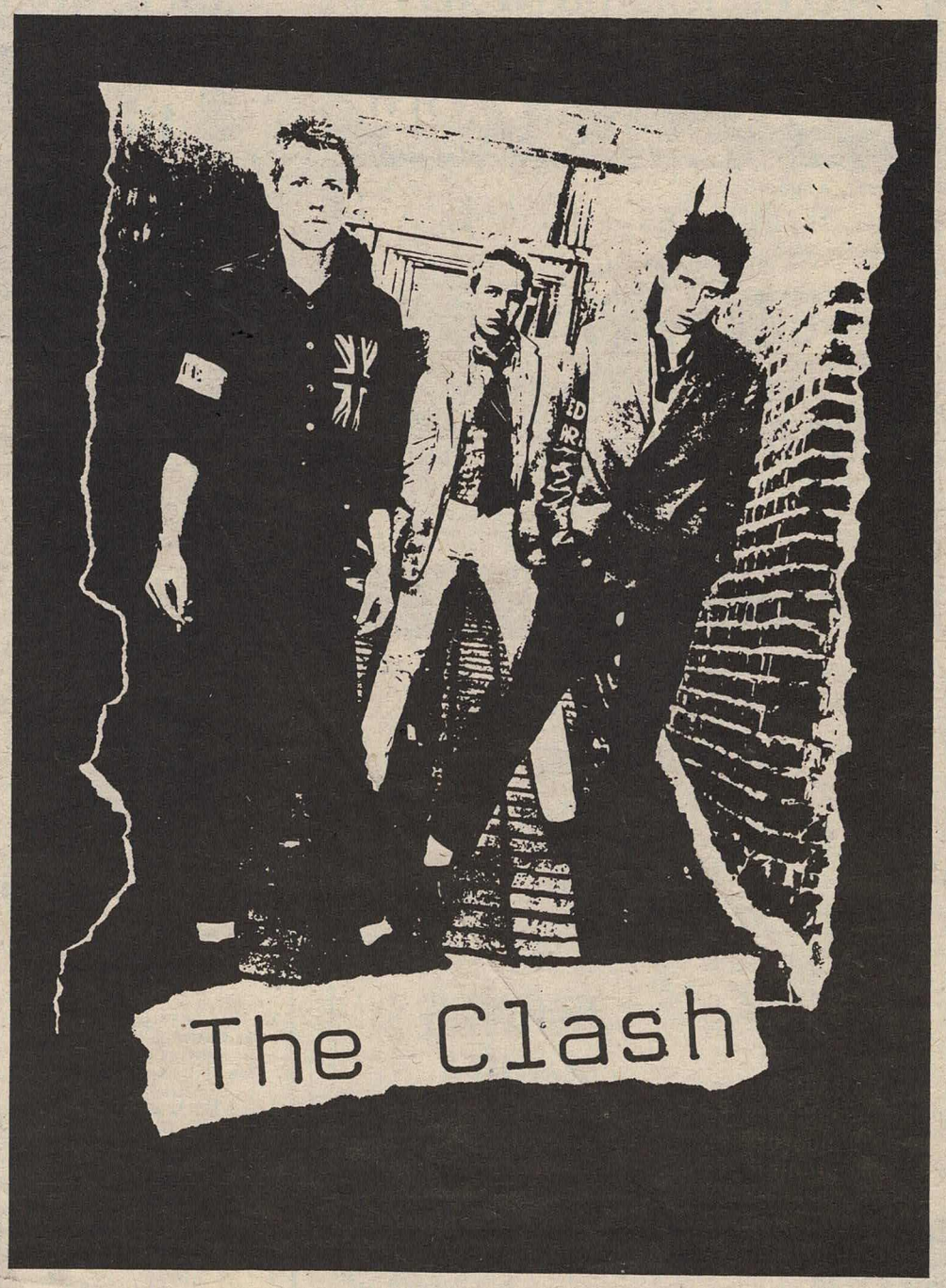

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"How can I hope to get noticed sharing a stage with a sex bomb?"

Sex kitten sharpens claws, headline writer blunts brain

Blondie
NEW YORK

MAX'S KANSAS CITY has become a tourist rip-off joint — $5 admission and no way to see anything unless you booked a table.

The curtains were pulled back by hand like some scruffy Soho strip club and there on stage, blinking nervously through heavily made up eyelashes and wearing a green satin mini-dress, was Debbie.

She is pretty, she is sexy, she looked like Brigitte Bardot on speed . . . and unfortunately she sang that way too. She clutched at the microphone for support and, when she remembered, she jumped up and down on the spot or did something with her hands.

This is better than she used to be. People say that she used to stand dead still and stare terrified at the audience until she could stand it no more, and would go and hide behind the amps while everyone cringed in embarrassment.

Debbie is set off by guitarist Chris Stein, who looks like a sleazy Egyptian with a drawn on pencil moustache. He is an adequate player and will probably improve a lot.

The bass player, Gary Valentine, continues the NYC tradition of pretending to be a lifesize clockwork model of Chuck Berry. Periodically he hits that nerve which makes his left leg jerk up in a catatonic approximation of a high kick.

There's a keyboard man, Jimmy Destri, but on all three times that I've seen the group he seemed to be unhappy about technical problems.

Drummer Clement Burke was directly behind Debbie, and so I found it hard to focus my eyes that far back — but what I heard was a reasonable approximation of a Keith Moon rock'n'roll style with maybe a few too many drum rolls.

He plays at breakneck speed and, coupled with Valentine's strong bass line, he provides a solid framework for Debbie's shaky vocals.

Without Debbie there would be no Blondie — she is the *raison d'etre* and the ultimate focal point of the group.

I've talked with critics who think that she is just being exploited and that the whole group is just another piece of tacky, sexist packaging to make a quick buck. I can certainly see this argument, and it would certainly be true if Debbie was a Farah Fawcett-Majors inflatable barbi-doll. But it would be very hard to turn Debbie into a plastic object.

The very tackiness of her act, the inept strip-tease gestures, the mock theatricality of her poses — she freezes with her arms crossed before her face like a plaster of Paris Virgin Mary — all these save her.

Everything is delivered with such an air of innocence — from the enthusiastic snatches of belly dancing to the little girl pouts — that there is an immediate rapport between stage and audience.

Blondie like the '60s. Most of their numbers have their origins in the British invasion, and so are immediately inviting to a British listener.

Everything about the Max's set — and I saw both houses — suggested that Blondie was a group who were not yet ready to perform, let alone make an album (the album is not very good), and so it was with trepidation that I arrived early enough to catch them as the opening act for Iggy Pop at the Palladium.

But all my fears were quashed — they were magnificent . . .

Obviously conscious that it was make-it or break-it time, they pulled out all the stops. Debbie strutted across the long stage and even crawled across it on her belly like a reptile at one point. Her voice was tuneful, though still not great, and she'd worked out a stage act to allow for the huge distance between her and most of the audience.

Gary Valentine spun round and jerked about like the Tin Man from the Wizard of Oz on a caffeine jag and the drummer just went crazy — he sprayed the stage with sweat, often played triple time, and in the end, amid tremendous applause, seemed punch drunk and unable to leave the stage.

In 40 minutes we saw a group prove themselves — it was a great event.

Not everyone like them mind you. The ladies in the audience were quite critical. "I think she looks disgusting," said a woman in an ostrich hair-do in front of me. The men love her. One guy leapt up and threw a white carnation to her just as she began singing "I Didn't Have The Nerve To Say No".

Some of her tunes stay in my head even now. "I Know Her", for instance, has an anthem quality to it, whereas "A Shark In Jet's Clothing" is just good honest rock'n'roll.

Debbie stood grinning at the audience, absently scratching at her stomach like a Ninth Avenue whore. She knew she had the audience in her pocket — it must have felt great.

I recalled the Max's gig, Debbie sucking on a lollipop, pulling the rounded head lasciviously back and forth between her lips. A guy at our table shuddered involuntarily and spilt his beer all down his front. She may not have the voice so well yet, but she's got the power.

Miles

Brody
EDINBURGH

NOW HERE'S a bit of enterprise: an ambitious group with strong local following who cut a demo and then hire a cinema for their own show, and invite up the record companies. Brody are Edinburgh's best loved sons, and the area's heavy rock kings.

It's a Sunday evening and they've just about filled the cinema — and it's by no means central. Brody are all keyed up to impress, and they start nervously, the sense of occasion weighing them down. It's not until halfway through that they finally relax and cut loose, shedding the ponderous for the exciting, and climax with a barn-storming version of "Roadhouse Blues".

Now this kind of stuff is not my cup of meat, but if Brody can produce this kind of reaction in reserved Edinburgh than it's difficult to see how they can fail nationally. I doubt if they'll pick up too many critical plaudits on the way — their current material does, after all, tend to feature over-blown epics with dumb lyrics about dragonflies.

The latter half of the set is much the best, especially the rock instrumental, which allows Kenny Brodie to demonstrate just what a good guitarist he is. Nice clean flowing lines with a beautiful absence of overkill.

The rest of the group comprises Kenny McDonald on keyboards (organ mainly, which is good news), Tom Archibald on drums, Tom Davidson on vocals and Colin Archbold on bass.

If anyone's life has not been the same since Deep Purple finally lumbered into the Elephants' Graveyard, then they should keep an eye on the rising star of Brody.

Ian Cranna

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American dreams on the dollar trail

John Miles Manfred Mann
PHILADELPHIA

JOHN MILES has finally junked his James Dean image good and proper. When he walked onstage at the Tower Theatre he was sporting a luxuriant moustache. Maybe now he thinks he is Clark Gable.

Miles is making slow progress on his American Odyssey. As support act to Manfred Mann's Earth Band (themselves supporting Gary Wright much of the time), he is restricted to six songs only, and chooses to go for a hard sell with five from the latest album.

"Manhattan Skyline" is the opener, with a good strong melody and hook and a driving, economical guitar solo from Miles himself. The subject matter rather takes coals to Newcastle, but the crowd — who are still drifting in — are appreciative.

"Stand Up" and "Glamour Boy" follow up with the four-piece producing a fat, full sound, easily making up for the absence of brass and strings. The comment implicit in "Glamour Boy" is somewhat lost on American fans, who missed the fuss over the James Dean ploy.

For "Stranger In The City", Miles makes a feeble attempt to get the kids clapping along on the beat. As soon as he sings, they put their hands back in their pockets.

Miles' bassist, who looks like a cross between David Essex and a police cadet, appears somewhat unthrilled to be here.

"High Fly" is the big crowd pleaser, taken at breakneck speed, and the band attempt to sustain the momentum with their new single, "Slow Down".

Since this is a scurrying disco tune, the keyboard player tries for some visual flash. His electric piano comes off its stand, and he lurches around the stage with it hanging round his neck. Sadly, he has the look of a strongman attempting to tow a car with his teeth who's just remembered the brake is on.

Still, the Miles band get their reward in a satisfying burst of applause. Their set is tight and energetic. The songs have great sales appeal. What is needed is a hot new single to push themselves into overdrive.

Manfred Mann has a similar problem. Where's the next single coming from? At present, for reasons best understood by himself, Manfred's resisting appeals to put out the live set's most melodic song, "Davy's On The Road Again".

Instead, the plan is to push out another Bruce Springsteen song, "Spirit In The Night", to follow up the US number one with "Blinded By The Light". Well, we'll see.

In Philadelphia, at least, Manfred has got it made. A

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Elton John — Bite Your Lip
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James Brown — Sex Machine
Pink Floyd — TIME/Us And Them
Argent — God Gave Rock And Roll To You/Hold Your Head Up
Johnny Kidd — Shakin' All Over
M.F.S.B. — T.S.O.P.
Chicken Shack — I'd Rather Go Blind
Terry Jacks — Seasons In The Sun
Fleetwood Mac — Albatross
Marcels — Blue Moon
Suzi Quatro — Devil Gate Drive
Mud — Tiger Feet
Cockney Rebel — Make Me Smile
Black Sabbath — Am I Goin' Insane
Status Quo — Break The Rules
Status Quo — Paper Plane
Janis Ian — At Seventeen
Hollies — The Air I Breathe
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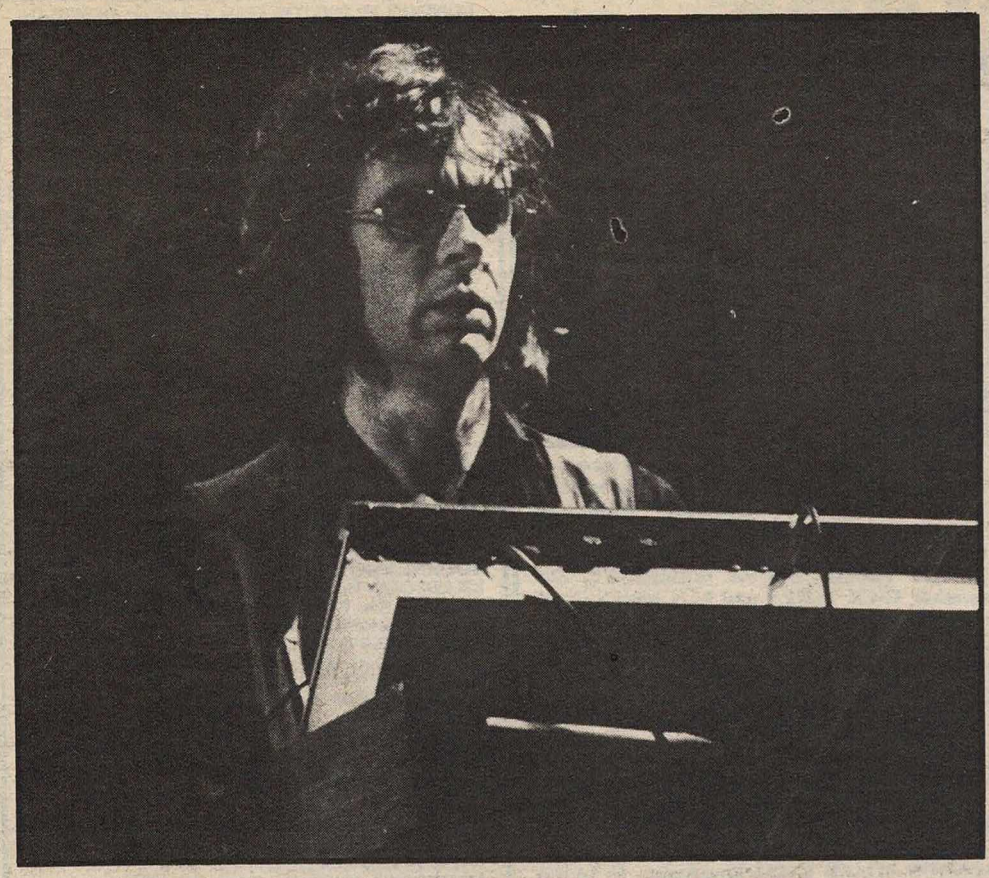
"Fred Basset? Who, me?" *Pic: ELAINE BRYANT*



rapturous response grows more enthusiastic as the evening progresses.

The Earth Band's approach is to combine commercial-sounding songs with fierce instrumentals.

For a man who closely resembles Fred Bassett, Manfred plays remarkably aggressive rock. Though his keyboard solos still have an unmistakeable jazz influence, his major concern is drama and attack.

Manfred's not given to the overkill of a Wakeman or a Moraz. No exotic costumes or floodlighting. He tends to shelter behind a barricade of keyboards and let his music speak for itself.

Much of the focus of attention is on guitarist Dave Flett. Imagine Buster Keaton with a Pre-Raphaelite hairdo and you get the picture. Flett is much given to posing in spotlights, and, with his frenzied style, he's in danger of becoming a star turn on his own.

His solos go from petting to consummation in record time, revealing a debt to McLaughlin that he repays with sheer energy.

"Waiter, There's A Yawn" is the opening instrumental that establishes the band's musical credentials. "On The Road To Babylon" shows the importance of Chris Thompson, whose voice provided much of the appeal of "Blinded". Thompson tends to hide himself under a stetson, a beard and specs, so the confident power of his vocals comes as a surprise. The rasp and authority of a Paul Rodgers combine with the range and feeling that Joe Cocker once possessed.

Thompson is a discovery.

The show's highlight is inevitably "Blinded", but there's more than enough euphoria generated throughout the set to settle the question of the band's potential.

A few more singles of the same calibre are needed, preferably all tracks from the same album.

Bob Dylan, where are you?

Bob Edmands

JAZZ DIARY

THE CHRIS BARBER Jazz & Blues Band are breaking their European tour to play a week of gigs here — 21st April, Fir Tree Ballroom, Wellingborough; 22nd Town Hall, Acton; 23rd Guardian Royal Exchange Club, Ipswich; 24th Town Hall, Colne; 25th Mercury Theatre, Colchester (last outpost of jive); and two BBC Radio 2 recordings on 26th. On 4th July, the band headline the Jubilee Jazz Jamboree at the Royal Festival Hall in the presence of the royal stuff-strutters, Anne & Mark.

US tenor star **Bud Freeman** makes a birthday appearance at the Pizza Express, Dean Street on 13th April, followed by dates at the Key Theatre, Peterborough on 16th; Blanford Forum on 23rd; Red Lion, Hatfield on 25th; College of Further Education, 30th.

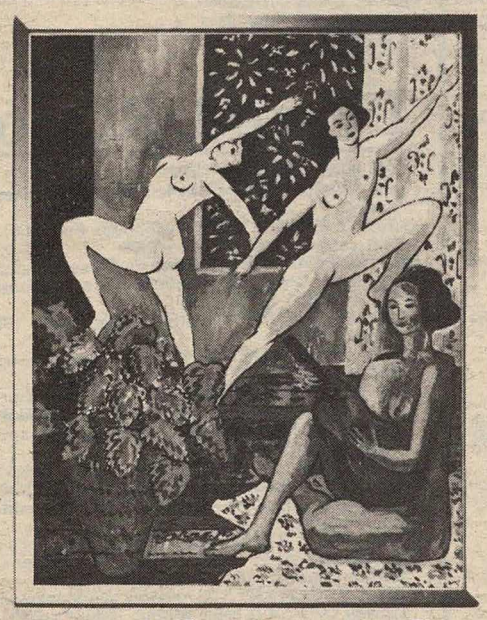
Buddy Tate and **Jim Galloway** are playing at the Vernon Gallery, Preston on 13th; Stratford-on-Avon on 14th; Pizza Express on 15th; Football Club, Gt. Harwood on 17th; Bracknell on 19th; Concorde Club, Southampton on 20th and the Band on the Wall the following night. **Eddie 'Cleanhead' Vinson** will not be coming over, but **Al Haig** will in the autumn.

The Gala Concert and Celebration of **Duke Ellington's** music at the New Victoria on 17th April has been cancelled. The JCS venues feature **Henry Lowther's Quarternity** at the Star & Garter on 16th, **Ascend** at the Phoenix on 20th, and **Geoff Castle's Strange Fruit** at 7 Dials on 21st.

Worth hunting for on the Douglas label are five albums recorded at **Sam Rivers'** studio, Rivbea, under the title "Wildflowers". Groups include **Air, Leo Smith, Braxton, Kalaparusha, David Murray, Hamiet Bluiett, Phillip Wilson, Sonny Murray, Julius Hemphill, Byard Lancaster** and **Oliver Lake** — an excellent survey of the current avant-garde. In similar vein, Transatlantic have secured the distribution of the Arista-Freedom label, which means **Shepp, Randy Weston, Cecil Taylor, Hemphill,** etc.

On the British front, Mosaic has released "New Conditions", an eight-part composition by **Graham Collier,** and Ogun has released "Diverse" by **Lol Coxhill,** one side a duet for soprano saxophone and loose floorboard (unrelated).

Brian Case



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30th April	**BRADFORD** University	15th May	**MIDDLESBROUGH** Town Hall
3rd May	**PLYMOUTH** Fiesta	16th May	**NEWCASTLE** City Hall
4th May	**SLOUGH** Fulcrum Theatre	17th May	**ABERDEEN** Music Hall
5th May	**WEST RUNTON** Pavillion	18th May	**GLASGOW** Apollo
6th May	**BURY St. EDMUNDS** Focus Theatre	19th May	**EDINBURGH** Playhouse
		21st May	**MANCHESTER** Apollo
7th May	**SOUTHAMPTON** University	22nd May	**BIRMINGHAM** Odeon
8th May	**DUNSTABLE** Queensway	23rd May	**LIVERPOOL** Empire

HARVEST

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NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

Main hotspots

RANDY EDELMAN is playing a handful of concerts, which this week include **Birmingham** (Thursday), **London** (Friday) and **Manchester** (Sunday).

BILLY CONNOLLY opens his massive 50-venue tour with gigs in Scotland at **Oban** (Thursday), **Campbelltown** (Friday), **Arran** (Saturday), **Musselburgh** (Monday), **Stonehaven** (Tuesday) and **Fraserburgh** (Wednesday).

CHI-LITES are back in Britain with dates at **Cromer** (Saturday), **Burnley (Sunday) and Leicester** (see Residencies).

BILLIE JO SPEARS CARL PERKINS and the DILLARDS feature in a country package tour kicking off at **Peterborough** (Saturday) and **Oxford** (Sunday).

ROY HARPER begins his re-arranged tour in Ireland at **Dublin** (Tuesday) and **Belfast** (Wednesday). Further coverage next week when he comes to the mainland.

ERIC CLAPTON starts his tour in **Leicester** on Wednesday, supported by **Slim Chance**. We'll be dealing with this itinerary more extensively next week.

SONNY TERRY & BROWNIE McGHEE open a lengthy tour in **Plymouth** on Wednesday.

JACK BRUCE BAND complete their travels with a major **London** concert on Friday.

ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL, the Texas swing-rock band, headline their first British concert in **London** on Saturday.

THE STRANGLERS top the bill at **London** Roundhouse on Sunday.

THURSDAY

ALDERSHOT J.R.C. Club: TRAX/SUN SESSION
AYLESBURY Britannia: SIDEWINDER
AYLESBURY King's Head: ROY BAILEY
BATH Viaduct Hotel: AFTER THE FIRE
BEDFORD Angel Hotel: AMITY
BEDWORTH Furness Inn: GRIND
BIRMINGHAM Barrel Organ: HOOKER
BIRMINGHAM Golden Eagle: SHOOP SHOOP
BIRMINGHAM Moseley Fighting Cocks: THE FIRST BAND
BIRMINGHAM Railway Hotel: MAGNUM
BIRMINGHAM Town Hall: RANDY EDELMAN
BLACKBURN Golden Palms: SAD CAFE/BUZZCOCKS
BLACKBURN Lodestar: FOSTER BROTHERS
BLACKBURN St. George's Hall: MARIAN MONTGOMERY
BRADFORD Changes Nite Scene: JIMMY HELMS
BRISTOL Granary: REMUS DOWN BOULEVARD
BRISTOL Naval Volunteer: SPIDER
BUCKLEY Tivoli Ballroom: BETHNAL
CARLISLE Twisted Wheel: BERNARD WRIGLEY
CLEETHORPES Winter Gardens: FRANKIE MILLER'S FULL HOUSE
CROYDON Red Deer: NASTY POP
DURHAM Lord Seaham: TONY ROSE
EXETER Zhivago's: ANGELS
HIGH WYCOMBE Nags Head: FABULOUS POODLES
HUDDERSFIELD Peacock Hotel: AULD TRIANGLE
JERSEY St Helier West Park Pavilion: J.A.L.N. BAND
LONDON BARNES Red Lion: FRED RICKSHAW'S HOT GOOLIES
LONDON CAMDEN Brecknock: MONTANA RED
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: GEORGIE FAME & THE BLUE FLAMES
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Red Cow: BUSTER CRABBE
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope & Anchor: ROOGALATOR
LONDON KENSINGTON The Nashville: FLYING ACES
LONDON Marquee Club: FUMBLE
LONDON PUTNEY Half Moon: SAMMY MITCHELL BLUES BAND
LONDON STOKE NEWINGTON Rochester Castle: XTC
LONDON TOOTING The Castle: PAINTED LADY
LONDON W.1 Cock Tavern: HOT VULTURES
MIDDLESBROUGH Maddison Club: ROKOTTO
MONMOUTH White Swan Hotel: NIGHT BIRD
NEWCASTLE Newton Park Hotel: STEVE BROWN BAND
NOTTINGHAM Commodore Suite: THE DRIFTERS
NOTTINGHAM Imperial Hotel: PELICAN
OBAN Corran Hall: BILLY CONNOLLY
PERTH Salvation Hotel: DEAD END KIDS
PRESTON Guildhall: SMALL FACES
SCUNTHORPE Theatre: OSCAR PETERSON
SHEFFIELD City Hall: MAX BOYCE/THERAPY
ST HELEN'S Theatre Royal: NEW SEEKERS
WEST BROMWICH Oakdale Social Club: CADILLAC

FRIDAY

BATH Hall & Feathers: PETE & CHRIS COE
BIRMINGHAM Barbarella's: FRANKIE MILLER'S FULL HOUSE
BIRMINGHAM Railway Hotel: SPITFIRE
BOURNEMOUTH The Village: SWEET SENSATION
BRADFORD Changes Nite Scene: JIMMY HELMS
BRADFORD Star Hotel: HENDON BANKS
BRIGHTON Buccaneer: KRAKATOA/HOUSE
BRIGHTON Embassy Cinema: THE JAM
BRIGHTON Top Rank: BRASS CONSTRUCTION
BRISTOL Granary: ACKER BILK BAND
BRISTOL Naval Volunteer: TOO COMFORTABLE BY FAR
BRYNMAWR Semtex Social Club: RUFF HANDFUL
BURNLEY Bank Hall: SNEAKERS
BURTON 76 Club: REMUS DOWN BOULEVARD
CAMBERLEY Lakeside Club: THE DRIFTERS
CAMBRIDGE Corn Exchange: JOHN CALE/COUNT BISHOPS/THE BOYS
CAMPBELTOWN Victoria Hall: BILLY CONNOLLY
CROMER West Runton Pavilion: FLYING SAUCERS/SECOND OPINION
CROYDON Fairfield Hall: TWIGGY
DUDLEY J.B.'s Club: KITES
DYFED Lampeter University: TEMPERANCE SEVEN
GLASGOW Apollo Cente: GLEN CAMPBELL
HETHERSAGE Scotman's Pack Inn: BILL CADDICK
HEBDEN BRIDGE Carlton Ballroom: BERNARD WRIGLEY
HIGH WYCOMBE Nags Head: ONLY ONES
KETTERING Central Hall: OZO
LEEDS Fforde Green Hotel: HOOKER
LEEDS Town Hall: MAX BOYCE/THERAPY
LEIGHTON BUZZARD The Swan: RON WAKELY BAND
LONDON CAMDEN Brecknock: TROUPER
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: STRUTTERS/UNCLE PO
LONDON CLAPHAM Two Brewers: ELAINE DAVIS BAND
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Red Cow: JOHN OTWAY & WILD WILLY BARRETT
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope & Anchor: CRAZY CAVAN 'N' THE RHYTHM ROCKERS

The reunited SMALL FACES have just set out on their comeback tour, taking them this week to Preston (Thursday), Manchester (Saturday), Glasgow (Sunday), Edinburgh (Monday) and Newcastle (Tuesday). Pictured left to right are KENNY JONES, STEVE MARRIOTT, new member RICK WILLS and IAN MacLAGAN, snapped at Marriott's recent wedding.

LONDON Marquee Club: ULTRAVOX
LONDON New Victoria Theatre: JACK BRUCE BAND
LONDON Royal Festival Hall: RANDY EDELMAN
LONDON SOUTHGATE Royalty Ballroom: GEORGIE FAME & THE BLUE FLAMES
LONDON STOKE NEWINGTON Rochester Castle: BRETT MARVIN & THE BLIMPS
LONDON WILLESDEN White Horse: CADILLAC
MANCHESTER Electric Circus: S.A.L.T.
MIDDLESBROUGH Rock Garden: SQUEEZE
MIDDLETON Ringo's Bell: TONY ROSE
NEWCASTLE Mayfair Ballroom: WIDOWMAKER
PLYMOUTH Woods Centre: AFTER THE FIRE
REDDITCH Sticky Wickett Club: EARL OF CANVEY
RETFORD Porterhouse: STRETCH
RUSHDEN Wheatsheaf: WILD THING
SOUTHPORT Coronation Hotel: VIN GARBUTT
STALYBRIDGE Tameside Theatre: LEGEND/VICTOR BROX BLUES TRAIN/JOHN ROBBIE & FRIENDS
TAUNTON Brewhouse Theatre: STAN TRACEY QUARTET
WENTWORTH Rockingham Arms: TONY CAPSTICK
WICKERSLEY Three Horseshoes: PETE QUIN
WOLVERHAMPTON Lafayette: CHERRY VANILLA

SATURDAY

ARRAN Public Hall: BILLY CONNOLLY
BANGOR University: DAVE BURLAND
BARNSTAPLE Queen's Hall: YETTIES
BARROW Maxim's Disco: BETHNAL
BASINGSTOKE Brighton Hall Centre: FABULOUS POODLES
BELFAST Queen's University: KEVIN COYNE
BIRMINGHAM Barbarella's: FRANKIE MILLER'S FULL HOUSE
BIRMINGHAM King's Heath Hare & Hounds: FRED WEDLOCK
BIRMINGHAM Odeon: TWIGGY
BRISTOL Granary: STRIFE
CAMBERLEY Lakeside Club: THE DRIFTERS
COVENTRY Theatre: PAM AYERS
CROMER West Runton Pavilion: CHI-LITES
DUDLEY J.B.'s Club: STRAY
EASTBOURNE Congress Theatre: JAMES LAST ORCHESTRA
EDINBURGH Triangle Folk Club: EDINBURGH SHETLAND FIDDLERS
EXETER Zhivago's: HOLLYWOOD
EXMOUTH Pavilion: JIMMY HELMS
GLASGOW Apollo Centre: GLEN CAMPBELL
GREAT HARWOOD Football Club: BERNARD WRIGLEY
HASTINGS Pier Pavilion: EASY GLIDER/ROOGALATOR
HIGH WYCOMBE Nags Head: CHARTREUSE
HITCHIN Town Hall: FLYING SAUCERS/MATCHBOX
HULL Cottingham University: VIN GARBUTT
INGLETON Ingleborough Community Centre: MARTIN SIMPSON
JACKSDALE Grey Topper: JET HARRIS
LEICESTER De Montfort Hall: MAX BOYCE/THERAPY
LONDON CAMDEN Brecknock: HOMBRE
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: RADIATOR
LONDON COVENT GARDEN Roxy Club: HIGH MILEAGE
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Odeon: ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL/CLOVER
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Red Cow: BUSHWACKERS
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope & Anchor: BEES MAKE HONEY
LONDON KENSINGTON The Nashville: CRAZY CAVAN 'N' THE RHYTHM ROCKERS
LONDON Marquee Club: KILLER
LONDON PECKHAM Bouncing Ball: CEDAR ROOTS
LONDON Royal Festival Hall: SPINNERS
LONDON STOKE NEWINGTON Rochester Castle: STRUTTERS
LONDON W.1 Rising Sun: HOT VULTURES
LUTON Kingsway Tavern: CADILLAC
MANCHESTER Ardwick Appollo: SMALL FACES
MANCHESTER Electric Circus: CASINO
MIDDLESBROUGH Rock Garden: ULTRAVOX
MIDDLESBROUGH Town Hall: HERON
NORTHAMPTON County Ground: GRIND/MEDICINE HEAD
PETERBOROUGH ABC Theatre: BILLY JO SPEARS/CARL PERKINS/DILLARDS
PORTSLADE Town Hall: POTTERS WHEEL/KNOTS OF MAY/CHANCTONBURY RING
RUSHDEN Athletic Club: WILD THING
SCUNTHORPE Priory Hotel: KRAKATOA
SOUTHEND Kursaal Ballroom: JOHN CALE/COUNT BISHOPS/THE BOYS
ST ALBANS City Hall: NEW SEEKERS
STEVENAGE Locarno: EARL OF CANVEY
ST. IVES St Ivo Centre: REAL THING
TELHAM Black Horse: HARVEY ANDREWS
TODMORDEN Bay Horse Inn: CLEMEN PULL
ULVERSTON Coronation Hall: PETE SAYERS
WIGAN Casino: WIDOWMAKER
WINSFORD Civic Hall: PETE & CHRIS COE

SUNDAY

ACCRINGTON Lakeland Lounge: S.A.L.T.
ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE Tamside Theatre: NEW SEEKERS
AYLESBURY King's Head: ONE UP
BANGOR University: TONY ROSE
BARROW Civic Hall: "UP COUNTRY" with BRIAN GOLBEY / PAT & ROGER JOHNS / JOHN CARLTON / STEPPINSTONE
BARROW Maxim's Disco: BETHNAL
BASILDON Double Six: CHAMPION
BIRMINGHAM Barbarella's: SORAHAN
BIRMINGHAM Barrel Organ (lunchtime): MENSCH
BIRMINGHAM Railway Hotel: BULLETS
BRACKNELL South Hill Park: PETE & CHRIS COE
BRIGHTON Top Rank: SMILING HARD
BRISTOL Dog House at the Stadium: SKIN TIGHT
BRISTOL Naval Volunteer: DETONATORS
BURNLEY Cats Whisker: CHI-LITES
CROYDON Fairfield Hall: THE STYLISTICS
EDINBURGH Usher Hall: GLEN CAMPBELL
GLASGOW Apollo Centre: SMALL FACES
HARTLEPOOL Nursery Inn: BATTLEFIELD BAND
LEICESTER De Montfort Hall: JAMES LAST ORCHESTRA
LIVERPOOL Empire Theatre: TWIGGY
LONDON BATTERSEA Nags Head: VERA JOHNSON
LONDON CAMDEN Brecknock: SCARECROW
LONDON CHALK FARM Enterprise: CHRIS FOSTER
LONDON CHALK FARM Roundhouse: STRANGLERS / THE JAM
LONDON CLAPHAM Two Brewers: PAINTED LADY
LONDON DRURY LANE Theatre Royal: THE DRIFTERS
LONDON FINCHLEY Torrington: ROOGALATOR
LONDON FULHAM Greyhound: DOWNLINERS SECT
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Red Cow: WARREN HARRY
LONDON KENSINGTON The Nashville: BEES MAKE HONEY
LONDON LEYTON Lion & Key: FLYING SAUCERS
LONDON Marquee Club: PLUMMET AIRLINES
LONDON NOTTING HILL Old Swan: AMAZORBLADES
LONDON Palladium: THREE DEGREES
LONDON STOKE NEWINGTON Rochester Castle: ROGER WILLIAMSON BAND
LONDON STRATFORD East Theatre: AN EVENING WITH BRIAN PROTHEROE & FRIENDS
MAIDENHEAD Skindles: JOHN CALE / COUNT BISHOPS / THE BOYS
MANCHESTER ARDWICK Apollo: RANDY EDELMAN
OSMOTHERLY Pied piper: BILL CADDICK
OXFORD New Theatre: BILLIE JO SPEARS / CARL PERKINS / DILLARDS
REDHILL Lakers Hill: HOT PINTS
ROMFORD Albemarle Club: SIDEWINDER
STOCKPORT Daventry Theatre: LIVERPOOL EXPRESS
WALSALL Dilke Arms: STAGE FRIGHT

MONDAY

ARNOLD Cross Keys: TONY ROSE
BIRMINGHAM Drakes Drum: STAGE FRIGHT
BIRMINGHAM Railway Hotel: RAINMAKER
BOSTON Folk Club: DUFFY BROTHERS
BOURNEMOUTH The Village: NO DICE
BRIDGNORTH Theatre On The Steps: BILL CADDICK
CHESTER Rascals Club: CHERRY VANILLA
CHIGWELL ROW Camelot Club: FRANK YONCO & THE EVERGLADES/KIT CONNORS
CRANFORD Community Centre: SWEET SENSATION
DONCASTER Outlook Club: SASSAFRAS
EBBW VALE Garnlydon Pondarosa: RUFF HANDFUL
EDINBURGH Playhouse Theatre: SMALL FACES
ERDINGTON Queen's Head: QUILL
HALESOWEN Tiffany's: JOHNNY THUNDER'S HEARTBREAKERS
ILFORD Cauliflower Hotel: ORIGINAL EAST SIDE STOMPERS
LONDON CAMDEN Brecknock: URCHIN
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: BEES MAKE HONEY
LONDON COVENT GARDEN Rock Garden: SQUEEZE
LONDON FULHAM Greyhound: KRAKATOA
LONDON FULHAM The Swan: ELAINE DAVIS BAND
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope & Anchor: CLAYSON & THE ARGONAUTS
LONDON KENSINGTON The Nashville: CUCKOO
LONDON Marquee Club: STRAPPS
LONDON PUTNEY Half Moon: JO-ANN KELLY BLUES BAND
LONDON PUTNEY Railway Hotel: TOBY
LONDON STOKE NEWINGTON Rochester Castle: SLOWBONE
LONDON WOOLWICH Tramshed: ASCEND
MUSSELBURGH Brunton Hall: BILLY CONNOLLY
PLYMOUTH Top Rank: JOHN CALE/COUNT BISHOPS/THE BOYS
RHYL St Asaph Talardy Hotel: GEORGE MELLY & THE FEETWARMERS
SOUTHAMPTON Anvil Folk Club: MARTIN CARTER & GRAHAM JONES
TOLWORTH Toby Jug: NASTY POP
WOODFORD Deanwater Hotel: BERNARD WRIGLEY

TUESDAY

BARROW Civic Hall: "UNDER MILK WOOD" with STAN TRACEY QUARTET/DONALD HOUSTON
BIRMINGHAM Barbarella's: THE DAMNED
BIRMINGHAM Railway Hotel: JAMESON RAID
BOURNEMOUTH Winter Gardens: JOHN CALE/COUNT BISHOPS/THE BOYS
BRIDLINGTON Queen's Hotel: TONY ROSE
BRIGHTON Top Rank: NO DICE
BRISTOL Colston Hall: NEW SEEKERS
DUBLIN Stadium: ROY HARPER & CHIPS
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD Great Harry: BULLFROG
JACKSDALE Grey Topper: NUTZ
KIDDERMINSTER Town Hall: JOHNNY THUNDER'S HEARTBREAKERS
LONDON CAMDEN Brecknock: SUPER DUPER
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: SOX featuring GORDON HUNT
LONDON COVENT GARDEN Rock Garden: PLUMMET AIRLINES/BELL-MARSDEN BAND
LONDON FULHAM Golden Lion: KRAKATOA
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope & Anchor: DOWNLINERS SECT
LONDON KENSINGTON The Nashville: THE JAM
LONDON Marquee Club: REMUS DOWN BOULEVARD
LONDON OXFORD STREET 00 Club: THE DARTS
LONDON PADDINGTON Western Counties: CHAMPION
LONDON PUTNEY Railway Hotel: NASTY POP
LONDON STOKE NEWINGTON Rochester Castle: TOOTING FROOTIES
LONDON Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: XTC
LONDON WOOLWICH Tramshed: TENNESSEE STUD
NEWCASTLE City Hall: SMALL FACES
NEWCASTLE University: STEVE BROWN BAND
NOTTINGHAM Imperial Hotel: GAFFA
RHYL St Asaph Talardy Hotel: GEORGE MELLY & THE FEETWARMERS
STONEHAVEN Town Hall: BILLY CONNOLLY
WESTBOURNE White Horse: MARTIN CARTER & GRAHAM JONES

WEDNESDAY

BELFAST Queen's University: ROY HARPER & CHIPS
BIRMINGHAM Bogart's: HOOKER
BIRMINGHAM Railway Hotel: FUNKTION
BOURNEMOUTH Winter Gardens: NEW SEEKERS
BRADFORD University: WARREN HARRY
BRISTOL Arts Centre: GOOD QUESTION
BUSHY Hartspring Community Centre: PETE QUIN
CHELTENHAM Tramps: BETHNAL
DERBY Cleopatra's: JOHNNY THUNDER'S HEARTBREAKERS
FRASERBURGH Dalrymple Hall: BILLY CONNOLLY
GRANGEMOUTH International Hotel: SKEELS
KETTERING Freewheeler: SHAG CONNOR'S CARROT CRUNCHERS
LEICESTER De Montfort Hall: ERIC CLAPTON BAND/RONNIE LANE'S SLIM CHANCE
LEICESTER Polytechnic: RADIATOR
LEICESTER Prohibition Club: PINKERTON'S ASSORTED COLOURS
LIVERPOOL Kirklands: GEORGE MELLY & THE FEETWARMERS
LONDON CAMDEN Brecknock: BERNIE TORME
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: ROKOTTO
LONDON CAMDEN Music Machine: SASSAFRAS-/RAYMOND FROGGATT
LONDON CAVENDISH SQ. Phoenix: ASCEND
LONDON COVENT GARDEN Rock Garden: SCREAMER/PANAMA SCANDAL
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Red Cow: DUST ON THE NEEDLE
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope & Anchor: JOHN STEVENS' AWAY
LONDON Marquee Club: NASTY POP
LONDON MORDEN The Rose: BRANDY
LONDON STOKE NEWINGTON Rochester Castle: ADVERTISING
NEWPORT Roundabout Club: THE JAM
PLYMOUTH Castaways Club: THE DRIFTERS
PLYMOUTH Woods Leisure Centre: SONNY TERRY & BROWNIE McGHEE
PORTSMOUTH Old House At Home: BOB DAVENPORT
SOUTHAMPTON Civic Centre: JOHN RENBOURN & JACQUI McSHEA
SOUTH WOODFORD Railway Bell: ORIGINAL EAST SIDE STOMPERS
WOLVERHAMPTON Layfayette: KITES

RESIDENCIES

BATLEY Variety Club: MADELINE BELL
Week from Sunday
BEDFORD nite Spot: CLODAGH RODGERS
Tuesday (19) for five days
BIRMINGHAM La Dolce Vita: GLEN CURTIN BAND
Week from Monday
BLACKBURN Cavendish: HEATWAVE
Thursday for three days
COVENTRY Theatre: THE DUKES & LEE SHOW
Tuesday (19) for a season
BRISTOL Crockers: LUCY LA STICK
Monday for three days
CAMBERLEY Lakeside Club: JOANNA STAR
Week from Monday
DERBY Bailey's: EDISON LIGHTHOUSE
Thursday for three days
LEICESTER Baileys: CHI — LITES
Week from Monday
LONDON Royal Albert Hall: JAMES LAST ORCHESTRA
Monday for four days
LONDON Talk Of The Town: WILMA READING
Monday for two weeks
MANCHESTER Golden Garter: THREE DEGREES
Week from Monday
MIDDLESBROUGH Maddison Club: ROKOTTO
Thursday for three days
NEWCASTLE La Dolce Vita (doubling **SOUTH SHIELDS** Tavern): LIGHT FANTASTIC
Week from Monday
OLDHAM Bailey's: HEATWAVE
Week from Monday
SHEFFIELD Bailey's: FAIRFIELD WELLES
Thursday for three days
STOKE Bailey's: BEANO
Thursday for three days
WATFORD Bailyy's: BARRON KNIGHTS
Week from Sunday

TV and Radio

"OLD GREY WHISTLE TEST" (BBC-4 Tuesday) with the **Atlanta Rhythm Section** and **John Stevens' Away.**

"MONTY PYTHON "(BBC-2 Monday). Repeat of very first series, dating back to 1969.

BROTHERHOOD OF MAN, Dennis Weaver and country singer **Crystal Gayle** guest in the **Val Doonican** Show (BBC-1 Saturday).

"TOP OF THE POPS" with **Jimmy Savile** (BBC-1 Thursday).

"JAZZ FROM MONTREUX" with **Sarah Vaughan** BBC-2 Friday).

"ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE" (ITV network Saturday) looks at Rhythm and Blues. Film of **Stevie Wonder, Aretha Franklin,** the **Supremes, Bill Haley** and the **Platters,** among others.

"STAR RIDER": London ITV sees **Be-Bop Deluxe** in concert at Leicester De Montfort Hall at 11.30 pm Thursday. But other regions see different editions on various days.

"SO IT GOES" (ITV Sunday). First of Granada's new in-concert series with **Andy Fairweather-Low.** Certain regions only.

"GET IT TOGETHER" (ITV network Wednesday) with **Lynsey De Paul & Mike Moran, John Christie** and **Alvin Stardust.**

"IN CONCERT" (Radio 1 Saturday) with **Eddie & the Hot Rods.**

"ROCK ON"(Radio 1 Saturday). **Stuart Grundy's** new lunchtime rock magazine.

"COUNTRY CLUB" (Radio 2 Thursday) with highlights from the Country Music Festival at Wembley Pool during Easter.

Postal Bargains from: Permaprints (Dept. N.M.147), P.O. Box 201, 96 Newington Green Road, London, N1 4RR

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(106 Type T-Shirts also available in child sizes: 26", 28", 30" & 32")
When ordering state size, colour and one alternative colour.

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All designs shown in this advertisement are available on this garment

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Available Plain or Printed

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Fleece lined

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Printed..... only £6.35 each
Plain..... only £5.95 each
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673. LEADER OF THE PACK

503. SCREW

665. SILVER JUBILEE

239 OFFICIAL GOOD IN BED EMBLEM

126. LIPSMAKIN

238. CHICAGO

188. PRODUCT

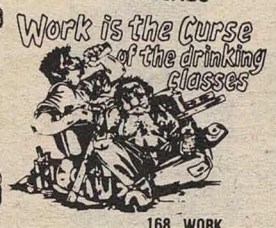
142. SANTANA

538. SOUTHERN COMFORT

125. VULTURES

167. JOIN THE ARMY

134. GENESIS

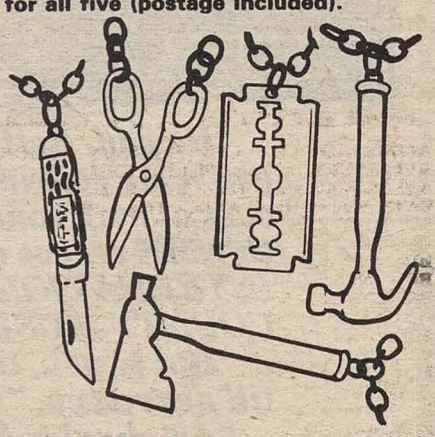


168. WORK

517. TRUCKIN'

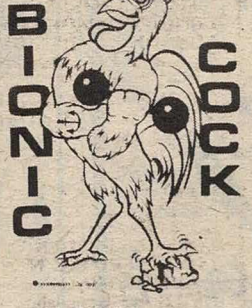
★ SPECIAL OFFER ★
From PERMAPRINTS

Pendants only 55p each to clear or £2 for all five (postage included).

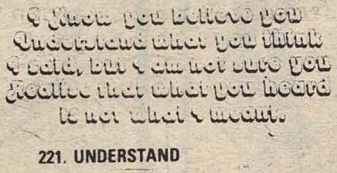


Heavy steel (nickel plated) pendants approx. 1½" long complete with 22" chain. 5 titles available, ONLY 55p each. (or £2 for all five) (A) razor; (B) scissors; (C) axe; (D) hammer; (E) knife.

663. COOL IT (FONZIE)



214. BIONIC COCK



221. UNDERSTAND

219. JOIN AIRFORCE

612. PATCH

528. APOLLO

229. SERENE BOOZER

11 NEWCASTLE BROWN

506. STATUS QUO

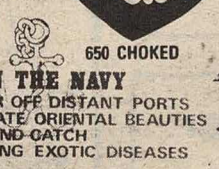
650 CHOKED

159 BEETHOVEN

175. UNION JACK

135. STATUS QUO

224. WINGS



222. JOIN THE NAVY

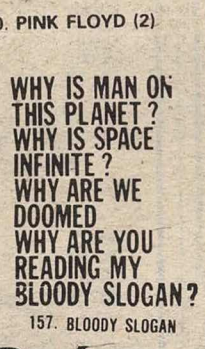
150. PINK FLOYD (2)

129. CONTENTS

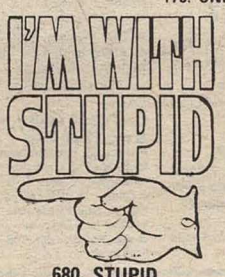
215. SING IN MORNING

227. MILCH TRAY

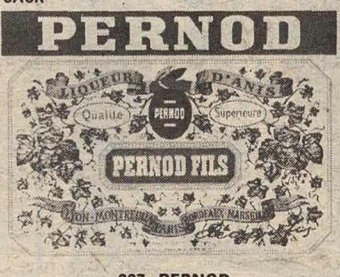
220. DRIVE ON PAVEMENT



157. BLOODY SLOGAN



680. STUPID



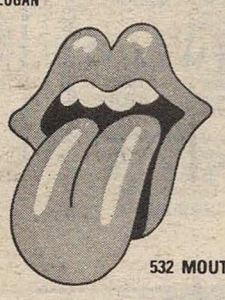
667. PERNOD

682. HAWKWIND

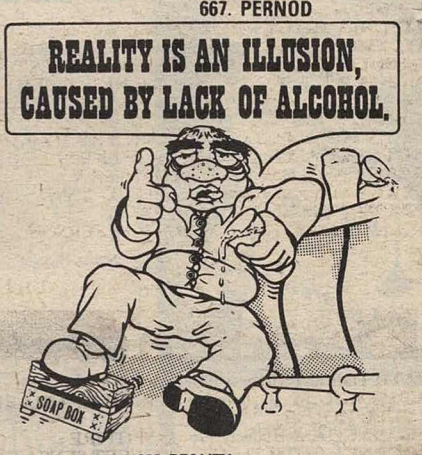
200. NAZARETH

148. LED ZEP

689. IT'S FOR YOU



532 MOUTH



232 REALITY

677. SUPERSIGN

No. 240 LYNYRD SKYNYRD

169. EAGLE

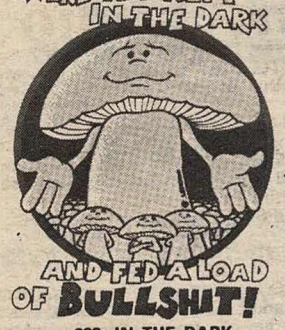
Yea, though I walk
through the valley of the shadow of death
I shall fear no evil. 'Cause I am
the meanest Son of a Bitch that
ever walked in
the valley.....

143. SON OF A BITCH

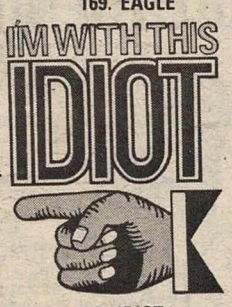
244. BUSBY BEAR

234. THIN LIZZY

248. POPPET



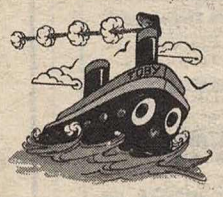
683. IN THE DARK



679. IDIOT

507. FLOYD

508. ZEPPELIN



242. TOBY TUG

664. CAMEL SMOKER

687. CHARLIE'S ANGELS

684. I'M CONSERVATIVE

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685. I'M LABOUR
686. I'M LIBERAL

199. EAGLES

237. STEELY DAN

246. REBEL

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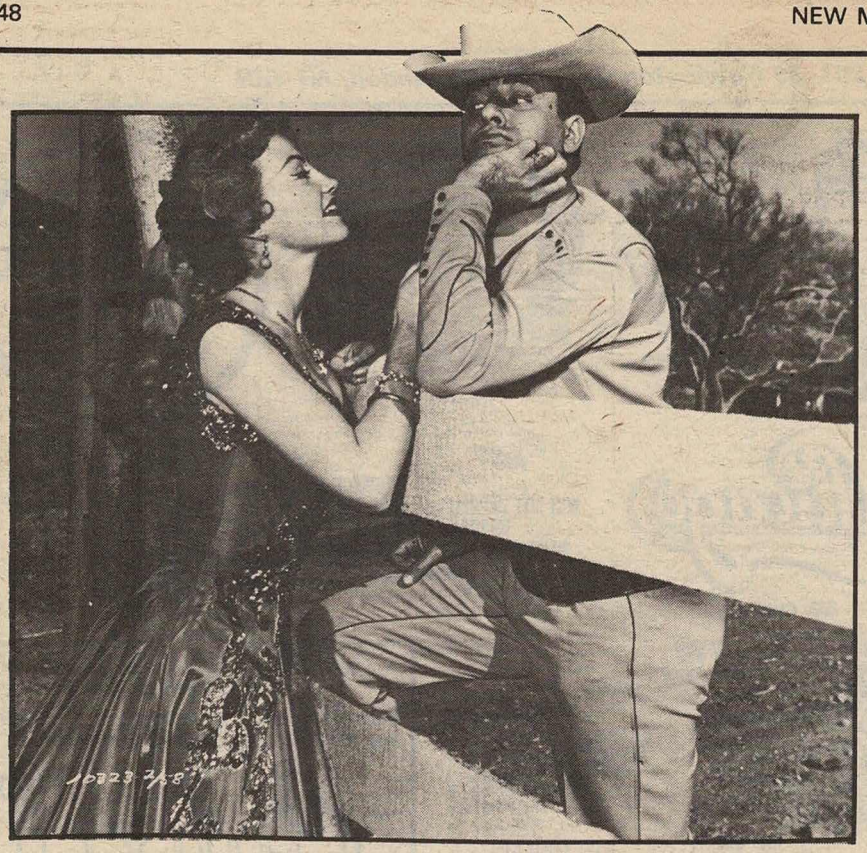

"Howdy, Betty Mae — how's about you'n'me cookin' up a mess o'beans over at mah ranch while we read th'NME reevoo on this hyar NINTH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF COUNTY MUSIC?"

"But honey, they ain't printin' it till next week."

"Aw shucks, Betty Mae, you know what Ah mean. Don't act so dang cussed — just take off yore . . ."

(cont. next week)

WHITE CHEESECLOTH KURTA
A good quality white natural cotton cheesecloth kurta with white embroidery. Only **£2.65** + 20p P&P. Chest sizes 28" to 42" girls 32" to 44". Him state chest size , her state bust size.

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Same style as above but with colourful embroidery on a white background. **£2.75** + 20p p&p. Chest sizes 36" to 42", bust 38" to 42", please state colours you like.

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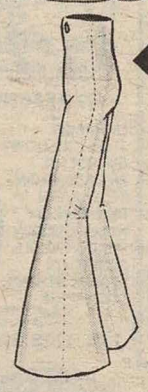

CHEESECLOTH SHIRT
Still seems the best buy for the cooler weather, in stripes, checks, plain, white or denim blue colour **£2.75** + 25p p&p. Sizes 28" to 42" 44" chest-/bust. Please state which design and your size).

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Nice fitting cheescloth shirts with two front flap pockets and back yoke. Available in stripes or checks, colours brown or blue. Also available plain in natural only. Size 32—40 chest/bust
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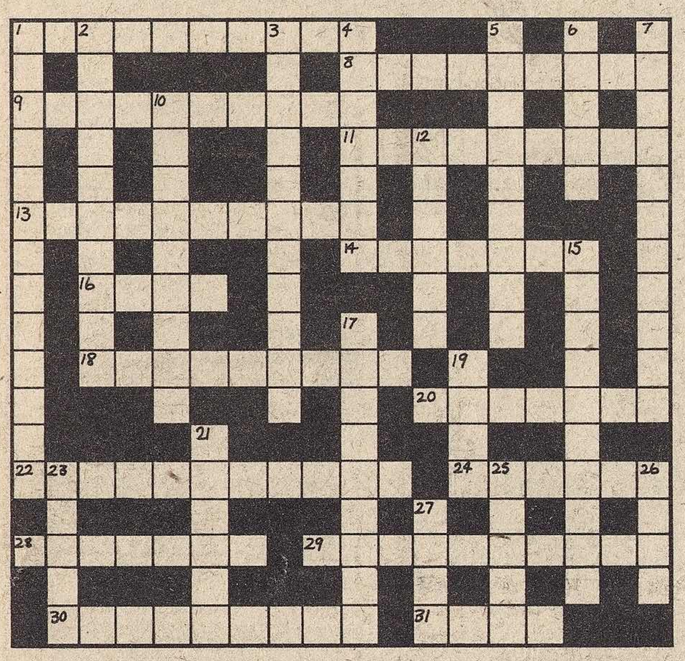

ACROSS

1 Unpleasant itching disease spread by sewers and New Wave drummers (3, 7)
8 He loves you. Brian loves you. They all love you. (Aren't you pleased?) (2, 7)
9 Him of "Hats Off To Larry" and "Runaway" (3, 7)
11 He loves himself. He catches his own meat and attacks his guitar. (3, 6)
13 i.e. burn cord (anag. 4, 6)
14 Of Newcastle or P. Floyd
16 Charlie's sister, they cut "Mockingbird" together
18 Toronto-born singer/writer/guitarist (4, 5)
20 Geoff was a member of the Jim Kweskin Jug Band when he met and married his (now estranged) better-known wife
22 Backers for Brucie's New Jersey buddy (6, 5)
24 A Bowie pin-up previously by The Merseys
28 Descriptive of 13 across; otherwise the group which had a 1973 hit with "All Because Of You"
29 Wimpy guts of Bread (5, 5)
30 Original line-up, when they made chart debut with "Whiskey In The Jar", included Eric Bell on guitar (4, 5)
31 F'instance Freddie, who recently went to the Great Tune-Up Room In The Sky

DOWN

1 Where every record's Patti's and Rimbaud scripts the commercial breaks! (5, 8)
2 Alternatively, adjust your dial for the best of New York rock'n'roll!
3 Said none ran (anag. 3, 8)
4 Freshly hatched in San Francisco, they achieved international recognition largely on the strength of "Woodstock"
5 Creedence Clearwater hit, it's since been widely-covered (5. 4)
6 Undecimalized Davis!
7 Termit bleed (anag. 5, 5)
10 In which Dave Clempson replaced Peter Frampton (6, 3)
12 The Zim's lustful longing!
15 Crazy Diamond At The Gates Of Dawn! (3, 7)
17 1974 U.S. No 1 for Helen Reddy (5, 4)
19 Seminal New York outrage/satire/poetry aggregation
21 Written by Smokey, a hit for The Tempts and O. Redding (2, 4)
23 Of "Funny Funny", "Wig Wam Bam" and all that crap
25 Phallic instrument!
26 As in Coast or Keith of Teenage Opera
27 Dave Davies f'instance

ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1 "The Idiot"; 5 Skins; 7 (Jonathan Richman & The) Modern Lovers; 8 Everly (Brothers); 9 Spencer; 11 Linda Ronstadt; 13 Little Feat; 14 "Eleanore"; 15 "Jet"; 16 Moon; 17 (Monty) Python; 18 Group; 19 "Brown (Sugar)"; 20 Faust; 23 Status Quo; 24 "Killer (Queen)"; 25 Figure (Martin).
DOWN: 1 Tom Verlaine; 2 Eddie And The Hot Rods; 3 Daryl Hall And John Oates; 4 Toots And The Maytals; 5 Swede; 6 "Sugar"; 10 "Extra Texture"; 12 The Stooges; 17 Pub-rock; 21 Troggs; 22 "Queen".

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What's the point any more? You don't get a chance to absorb even the first level of the latest media-borne phenomenon before the one-after-the-latest pours steaming off the presses and lands with a glossy thunk at your feet.

MacKinnon was right about cloddish sloggers like E.L.O. — except that who *isn't* a cloddish slogger these days? I bet The Damned are going through the motions by the end of the year — and if The Clash are still bulling around in the chinashop of their political fantasy in 1978, I'll be Chairman Mao's auntie.

I seem to remember a good letter from a guy who nominated a bunch of rockers — McCartney, Wonder, Fleetwood Mac, Boston, Floyd, Genesis, etc., etc. — to be rescheduled as middle-of-the-road acts. Such is the justifiably apathy of the public that nobody even bothered to take him up on it, one way or another.

Confess, *NME* — the record business is one big drag and there's nothing anyone can do to save it.

YAWNO TEDIUM,
I'm-Going-Fishing, Quietshire

● **Oh I *know* what you mean — but it's a feeling we *all* get when we're late for a date and just don't know *which* attitude to wear. But what's the *alternative,* my angel — heavens, some *truly* creative artists could go out of *business!***

I HAVE A THEORY and my theory is mine and goes like this: we're all hooked to the music business by 20 years of psychological conditioning to be good consumers. We are fooled thereby into thinking that something interesting or vital must always be happening in rock'n'roll — *otherwise why would we be buying it?*

Do you see the devilish cunning?

No, of course you don't because you think you like this garbage. However, you are merely a junkie and, as drug-users everywhere will tell you, junkies have a rather warped view of reality. The Drip-Feed Syndrome, I'd call it.

Rip out your catheters and live, you deaf dummies!

As evidence for the drug part of my startling thesis allow me to introduce as evidence this bit of a tract by the Warped Reality Kid himself, Nick Kent, describing the latest work of I. Pop (a record, Kent admits, that might easily drive a depressed person to suicide — how *romantic!*):

"... One thoroughly unsavoury scream after another from the full snot-stench of urban damnation. As such it's damn unhealthy, depressing, perverse, harrowing ... and strangely *addictive.*"

The italics, as Real Actual Writers say, are my own.

Casteneda rules, OK?

CROSS-EYED PETE,
Norwich, Norfolk

The Bag That Took Paris By Storm

Pic: DONNA SANTISI

Velda Dacquiri reports on the new designs of Yves St. B'ag and the new letters fashionable this spring. Above, rugged Welsh model John Cale parades the B'ag bag for leisure depression.

● **Casteneda? Wasn't he that *butch* little Mexican designer who was big for one season with his ... what was it? ... Yacqui *ponchos?* So *passé,* Pete, my angel. Velda's advice to anyone who thinks they *can't* wear the chic new romantic suicide look is to team it with the tarpaulin harem pants you wore *last* season.**

FOR THE PAST 11 to 12 years I've been a consistent and faithful reader of the NME, even during the early seventies when you had your own identity crisis and restructured the paper to what it is now. Sadly during the last two years I've read and watched your paper sink at the hands of your so called writers. The final straw came when I read Nick Kent's review of the Kinks concert. I just couldn't believe it, his article was pure unjustified journalistic garbage, the kind which now seems to be your trade mark.

I appreciate that Mr. Kent may not be a great admirer of the Kinks and to him it was just another concert to be reviewed but to write such slating and insulting statements, and was not only unnecessary but totally inaccurate as well. The Kinks were in good form and played an interesting mixture of old and new material, much to the delight and enjoyment of the audience, which as Mr. Kent puts it were probably "Kinkultists". But so what, it's fairly normal for people who really like a band to go and see them, rather than people who feel somewhat indifferent.

Ray Davies is an extremely creative writer and has a lot more talent in his little finger than most groups could ever muster up, given eternity.

The other music papers seem to be able to write reasonable reviews of artists, providing constructive criticism where it's appropriate, but poor old NME just scrapes lower and lower in that journalistic barrel. All I can say is, don't worry Ray, "Sleepwalker" is a masterpiece and I'm glad to see you are getting some recognition, even if it is across the water — Happy Days Brother and stay British.

NEIL MOORE,
Plymouth, Devon.

● **If you're still with us, Neil — *Neil! Neil?!* — I can recommend the interview starting page 23.**

I AGREE with Tony Parsons that "so many bands coming through now are churning out cliched platitudes and political nursery rhymes." Trouble is, so are many writers.

A little objectivity might come in useful when lightly discussing such breezy matters as burning London to the ground, destroying civilization, etc.

The casual turnaround of viewpoint viz the New Wave evinced in "Fear And Loathing At The Roxy" (March 21 *NME*) could be said to be evidence of the fact that, though strong on youthful energy and commitment, the spokespeople of this movement have little to offer in the way of reasoned proposals concerning the future of our admittedly besieged society.

And even if things *are* grim and the kids *do* have justification (if not an Inalienable Right) to spit on authority and exhort to mob-rule, it would be as well to view the whole ghastly shambles with a smile occasionally flitting around our amphetamine-dried lips, like.

After all, when the ship finally goes down ("Five years, that's all we got"), it's going to take *everybody* — not just the "pigs" our Tony rants against.

Cool it, man. Disaster's coming of its own accord. No need to hurry it.

ANDREW J. STEVENSON,
Liverpool

I'M DEPRESSED by depressing letters in *Gasbag.* I'm depressed by Tony Parsons' article on The Clash. I'm depressed by the fact that there really *isn't* any other argument in the world of rock'n'roll but the Punk vs Hippy thing we're all so depressed by. I'm depressed by what that implies about rock'n'roll.

But most of all I'm depressed by *NME's* failure to realise how depressing it is these days. Is that what living two hundred feet up in the air does to you?

DEPRESSED,
Sydenham, Kent

● **Yes, The Depression's still big news in Paris this spring — but with the new, *exciting* twist introduced by B'ag's layered look. That is, two cloth caps where last winter you wore *one.* The biggest *gasp* in paris was reserved for b'ag's model who wore three caps and four layers of waistcoats. very hot but so *depressing,* so *suicidal.***

I WRITE to register my disgust at the ridiculous remarks voiced by Angus McKinnon in your issue of April 2, 1977. I refer to His Suggestion that Stanley Clarke, Chick Corea and presumably all other fusion acts are lacking in achievement and trivialise consistently.

What I would like to draw to his attention to is the trivial New Wave given much coverage in your paper. Do we really need Punk Rock?

I would say that "School Days" by Stanley Clarke is one of the finest LPs to be released for some time, and he doesn't own one safety pin!

Perhaps boy Angus is into more accessible sounds like Abba, David Soul and Showaddywaddy? If so he should get a job with *Look In.* Their readers don't like Clarke, Sidran or Corea either.

If the remarks made were within the framework of a review I would welcome them as I think all criticism is fair, providing someone asks for it by proferring an L.P., but to make these remarks in the letters column is less defensible.

I also read Bert Weedon's letter, and though not exactly an avid fan of his, I agree with his sentiments. Let's have criticism but not personal bigotry. I suppose boy Angus is a fan of such cultural giants as Thin Lizzy, E.L.P. and Uriah Heep. Well fair enough, I mean its 'eavy man, but it appeals to someone, so I don't knock it.

My advice to you Angus is either (a) Listen to some Ben Sidran or (b) get back to your New Wave. Either way don't knock what you don't understand!

JOHN CLEVERLY
Cumberland Road, Reading, Berks.

● **Obviously the new B'ag fashions haven't reached *Reading* yet. Velda's advice to John is that he put his *old-fashioned* "Come off it blah, blah, blah — if you don't appreciate good music, go back to reviewing David Soul etc" arguments into mothballs before his friends laugh at him in the street.**

AM I THE ONLY person who noticed that the double-page ad for Clover (??) in your March 26 ish is distinctly peculiar? In the photograph the person (??) second from the left is wearing *trousers that have been painted on.*

Can you please tell me where I can get some?

THOMAS A. BECKET,
Poona, India

● **Yes St. B'ag's new painted trousers should be in the shops any day now.**

Alison Gross.
An original master.

AGGROBOX

HOW ABOUT gettin' things put straight.

You had a letter from a guy who calls himself "The Wild One" which you printed in *NME.*

He says he's a realist but he's makin' the Angels out to be nothin' but violent hippies. O.K. so we may be violent but if I thought we were hippies I'd drop my colours right now.

If you guys at *NME* have any class at all, you'll print this, then any of these "punks" who want to put the Angels down can write to you giving their names and addresses and I'll be glad to come down and show them the error they've made.

TAB, Hells Angels,
West Riding Nomads.

CASUALLY SIFTING through Springbag, we were not amused to read Neil Spencer's disgusting reply to P. Paly's (P for Punko?) letter. We quote: *"... Shouldn't we stop calling Heavy Metal fans with long hair 'Hippies'. Especially when they have as much to do with 'Peace and Love' as the Battle of the Somme"* un-quote.

We double-plus disagree with this untruth. We think you are possibly verging on *crime thought,* Maaan!

We agree that a minority of Heavy Metal freaks are *ungood,* but we, like most are peace-loving, cultured human beings. So don't put us down, right?

We are not into violence, you know, Man?

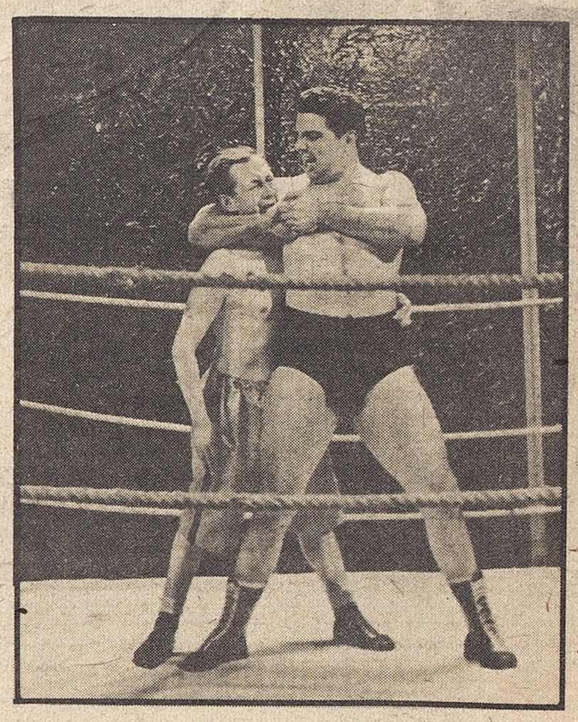
We double-plus un-dig the violent Punk Rock scene. Who are *you* to say we *are* violent?!

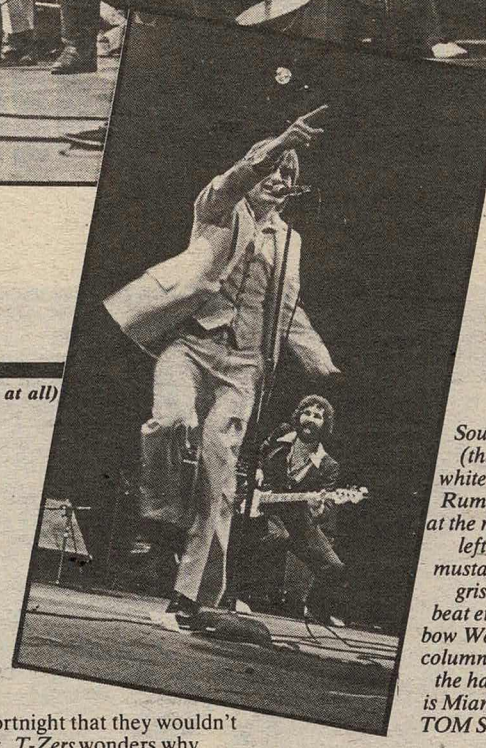
Finally we would like to say that we wish you no harm, but that you just may *cease to exist,* baby!

Lots of everlasting love and peace,
OMEGA OF RIPLEY,
Derbyshire.

IF GRAHAM Parker can be described as the world's first old hippy punk rocker, doesn't it make the argument rather pointless?
TIM, No address given.

● *You wanna argue the point, sweetie! — A BUTCH MODEL.*





Southside Johnny (that's him in the white suit) and The Rumour (G Parker at the mike, others to left of pic) cut the mustard, chomp the gristle, bite on the beat etc at the Rainbow Wednesday. See column 1. The guy in the hat, by the way, is Miami Steve. Pics: TOM SHEEHAN.

TEAZERS

A Weekly Miracle

(that any of this stuff ever gets written at all)

WAS IT PURE coincidence that when **Johnny Rotten** and entourage joined the post-gig party for **Southside Johnny** at the Rainbow on Wednesday, **Bob Harris** chose that moment to depart the proceedings?

Speculation and gossip aside, **Southside J and The Asbury Jukes** — with guest star **Ronnie Spector** excelling — delivered a truly magnificent/rousing/stupendous set earlier on the Rainbow stage, where they were joined towards the finale by **Graham Parker & The Rumour, Miami Steve** and various **Bandits.** Also at the apres-concert bash were members of **The Clash** . . .

As you've probably read in the nationals, **Cindy** "Miss World" **Breakspeare's** boyfriend **Bob** "Mr Jamaica — 'That's My business, mon!'" **Marley** was fined £50 when he appeared at Marylebone Court last week charged with possession of cannabis. Also in the dock: **Aston Barret,** who got stung £25 for having a spliff concealed in his sock. Afterwards Marley told reporters: "I smoke a joint of cannabis a day back home" . . . .

'Ot on the 'eels of the two **Stooges** re-issues and the info that Elektra will re-release **The MC5's** "Kick Out The Jams" to join "Back In The USA" in the record racks comes news of CBS scheduling **Iggy's** "Raw Power" for re-issue on the their budget Embassy label. For beginners, "Raw Power" was cut in 1973 when **David Bowie** rescued The Ig from the obscurity of cutting lawns and stalking the streets, and flew him, **Ron** and **Scott Asheton,** and axeman **James Williamson** to London and a recording studio. The release of "Raw Power" means that all The Ig's work to date will be fully available (this news brings a wry smile to the features of **Nick Kent**). **The 5,** meanwhile, need one more to complete their set — their third and last album "High Time", released by Atlantic in 1971 . . .

Uh! Glug! **Fleetwood Mac** recently raised some 22,000 dollars for The **Jacques Cousteau** Society . . .

No sign or word of **Wilko's** replacement when the **Feelgoods** played the Easter Festival in Munich over the weekend with **Henry McCullough** depping temporarily for the absent axeman and **Tim Hinkley** augmenting The Dr. on keyboards. . .

At the same festival, **Small Faces** in excellent form. See also page 36 . . .

Second **Fleetwood Mac** paragraph of the week: Bassist **John McVie** recently bought a house in California which he still hasn't even *seen* let alone viewed as prospective purchaser. McVie, currently in tow with a new girlfriend, has been living in a 40-foot ketch ("That's a kind of boat" — **E. Heath)** since moving out of the abode he shared with estranged wife **Christine.** It was **Mick Fleetwood** who viewed and arranged the purchase of McVie's new home — such trust in one's friend's judgements and taste is, we're sure you'll agree, truly touching . . .

He's a lad, inne. Because **David Bowie** called his album "Low", waggish **Nick Lowe** seriously thinking of calling his new EP "Bowi". . .

Clash booked last-minute ad spots on Capital Radio to announce their non-appearance at the weekend **John Cale** concerts. Since most people at *NME* had been hearing stories for a fortnight that they wouldn't appear, *T-Zers* wonders why their name continued to appear on ads for the gig and why it wasn't until Good Friday that they made their announcement via the radio . . .

We can't answer that, but we can tell you that **Generation X's** bass player (they took **Clash's** place) went onstage wearing a tee-shirt which claimed — and proclaimed — "The Clash were never booked" . . .

More on the same gig: **John Cale** turned in a great set, with more composure composure-wise than he displayed on his last tour, and was joined by **Chris Spedding** for his encore . . .

Cash in the krugerrands: On their forthcoming U.S. tour **E£P** taking entourage of 125 people including 70-piece orchestra and choir and full production crew on loan from the National Ballet of Canada . . .

After industry speculation of a link-up with Island, the determinedly-unconventional and fiercely-independent Beserkley Records is establishing its own operation in the UK, using Decca for distribution. Beserkley U.K. will operate out of Kingston-on-Thames (where they'll have to keep the windows shut to keep out the sounds of the **Moody Blues'** hi-fi's). First releases are singles by **Johathan Richman** ("Roadrunner"), **The Rubinoos** (their US hit "I Think We're Alone Now") and **Earthquake** ("Kicks") with new **Greg Kihn** and Jonathan Richman elpees to follow . . .

As predicted in *NME* — as they say — **The Vibrators** have left **Mickie Most's** RAK and signed, worldwide, to CBS . . .

Shades of Kong. **Evel Kneivel** planning a leap between the twin towers—a 300ft distance—of Manhattan's World Trade Centre as his next big jump . . .

"There are more major record company A&R men than punters in the Roxy Club these days, and the general vibe seems to be that if it moves and has a guitar round its neck, sign it" — Chiswick Records' boss **Ted Carroll** in *Music Week* explaining why he looked outside of London for two new signings, **The Radiators From Space,** from Dublin, and **Skrewdriver,** from Blackpool. Both have new singles on Chiswick for rush-release . . . .

Was **Joe Meek**, the man who produced **The Tornadoes** and **Heinz** among others, the first rock minimalist? Decca, who have a Joe Meek memorial album on release, threw a gig/party in North London last Tuesday (Meek's birthdate) with appearances by **Heinz** whose pre-**Billy Idol** platinum blond hair is now brown, **The Outlaws, Mike Berry, Screaming Lord Sutch** and **Rock Island Line**. **The Torndoes** and **Jess Conrad** watched but didn't participate. The venue was the Archway Tavern, just down the road from Meek's old studio . . . .

Our apologies to **Tony Calder** for the references to him in the piece on Immediate in *Thrills* last week. Calder says he has now severed all relations with the company, having tendered his resignation on July 1 1976. He left Immediate at the end of last year, and is now working in America outside the record business . . . Apologies also to **Alan Spenner** for confusing him with **Jim Mullen** in the feature on **Bridget St. John**. . .

T-Zers goes Nationwide — to Cornwall to be specific, where *NME's* **Neil Spencer** spent Easter, and reports not a safety pin in sight. Out West, hippies still rule OK. This has been a Nice-To-Know-There's-Some-Things-You-Can-Always-Rely-On special announcement . . .

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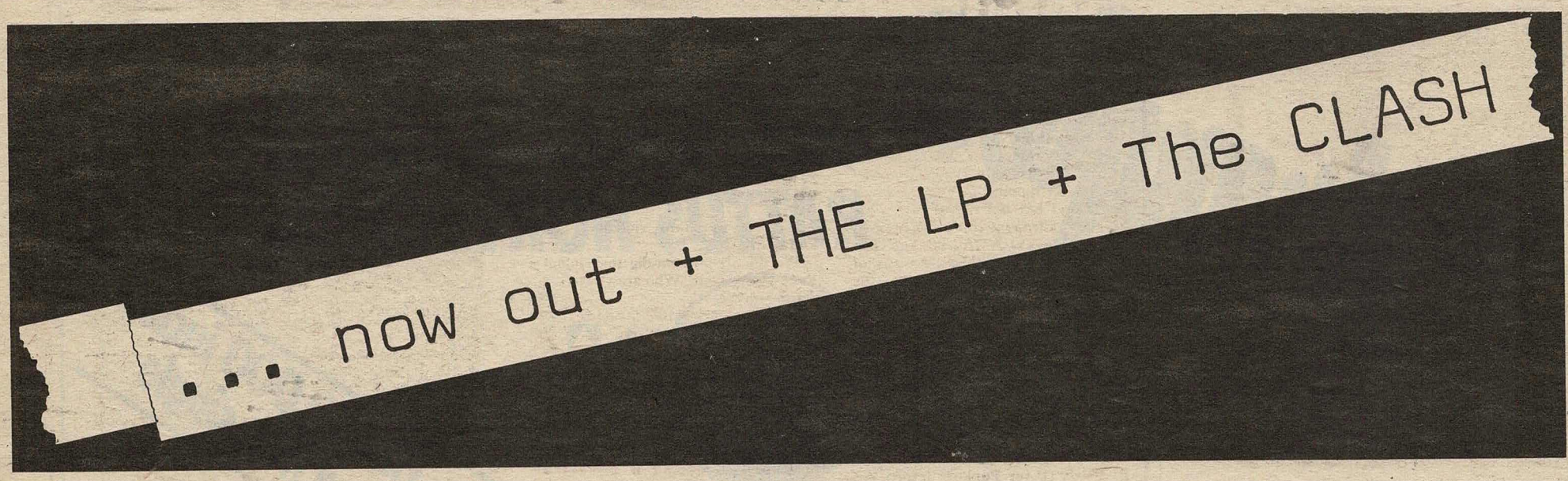

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"When was the last time you heard an angry psychedelic band?"

Giovanni Dadomo – Sounds

the stranglers

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